

Minnesota Preview • Mikaela Foecke Volleyball Feature • Q & A - Chris Jones

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

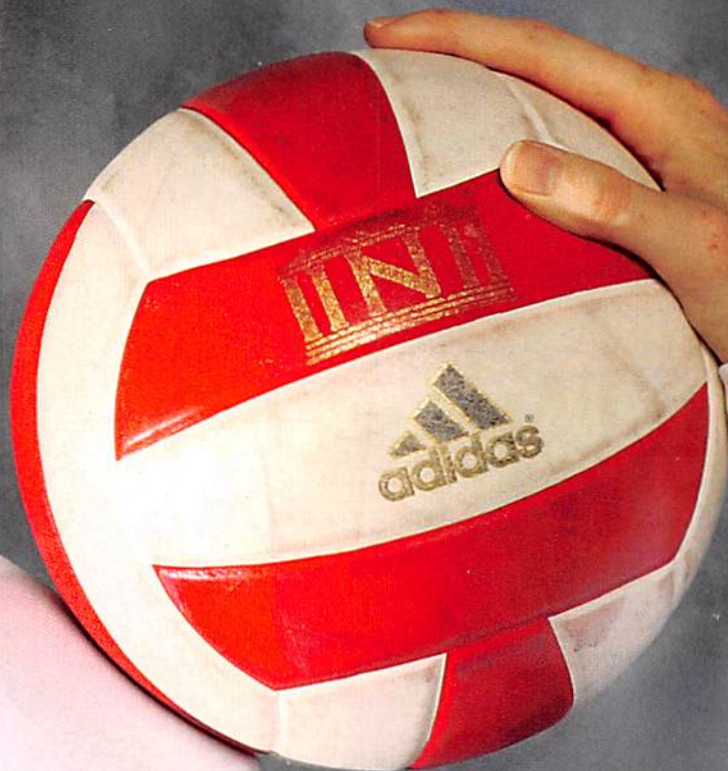
HUSKERS

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Nov. 12, 2016

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HUSKERS SUFFER MAJOR SETBACK AT OHIO STATE

I CAN'T COUNT HOW MANY TIMES I PEERED OUT AT THE GAME CLOCK ON THE OHIO STADIUM SCOREBOARD ON SATURDAY NIGHT WONDERING IF IT WAS OVER YET.

Each time, it seemed like the clock was stopped in space as the train wreck continued to play out down below on the field before 108,750 fans, the fourth largest crowd the Huskers have ever played before.

It's too bad there wasn't a running clock in this one or a white surrender flag because the Huskers played like they really didn't want to be here.

NU's spirit was broken early and every single break that went No. 6 Ohio State's way didn't help change the momentum.

From the opening coin toss, which Nebraska lost, to its very first possession that was returned for a pick six, to midway through the second quarter when Tommy Armstrong Jr. was literally knocked out, the No. 10 Huskers were completely overmatched and hapless in one of the biggest letdowns in school history.

Even when the officials looked to be giving NU a first down on the Ohio State two-yard line with 12:40 left in the game, they paused and called for a measurement.

Of course, NU was short.

It was one of those nights when all the critics and all of nationally-televvised audience got to have their laughs at Nebraska's expense yet again.

It was another major step back toward mediocrity.

Nebraska had its two weeks in the top 10 and was in national title talk again and it felt good to all in Husker Nation, but it appears to just be another mirage and now the Huskers are heading back to the 20s or worse depending on how these last three games turn out.

For Nebraska fans who've grown up watching the Huskers be on the winning side of many of these conference show-



downs, it's extremely frustrating to yet again be on this side of a blowout.

These complete meltdowns are one of the reasons Bo Pelini was eventually fired along with his attitude.

The sad thing is that no one saw this blowout coming, except for the oddsmakers in Las Vegas for some reason.

As we walked around Columbus before the game, most Buckeye fans we encountered felt that it should be a close game as their offense was struggling.

Despite a tough 23-17 overtime loss at Wisconsin last week, Nebraska fans we encountered were also more optimistic than they have been in years for such a big match up.

Most thought the Huskers would at least be competitive, even if they lost.

Included in that was Ohio State coach Urban Meyer.

"Wow, I didn't see that one coming," Meyer said in his opening statement of his press conference.

He attributed some of the outcome to the wear and tear of Nebraska's season and to college football being played by a bunch of 18 to 21-year olds.

Nebraska has endured a lot this season, and it had its share of adversity again Saturday night. So do other teams in the top 10 and they find ways to pull out victories or at least put up a fight.

For Nebraska to find a way to get back into the national relevancy or even conference title game on a consistent basis, it will have to find a way to beat the other two Big Reds of the Big Ten – Wisconsin and Ohio State.

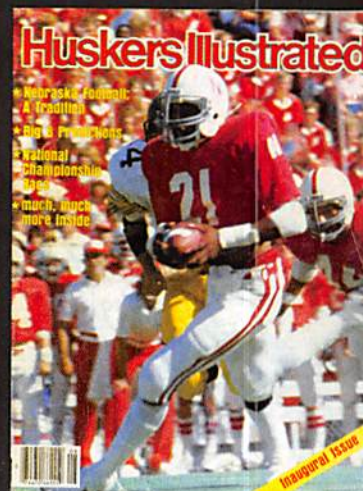
For now, the best Nebraska can hope for is that Armstrong will be cleared to go against Minnesota and a return home will help put the Big Red back on the winning track toward 10 wins, which would still be considered a successful season.

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The next Huskers Illustrated edition, featuring the Minnesota recap and the Maryland preview will mail on Monday, Nov. 14.

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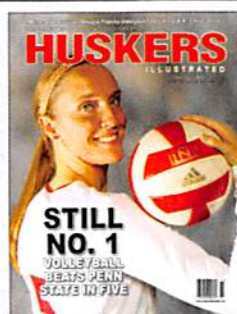
BY KEVIN HOUCK

Jones loves eating apple pie, especially at Thanksgiving time, his favorite superhero is Superman and he likes to use Instagram to keep up with friends.

2016 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
SEPT. 3	FRESNO STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7P.M.	W, 43-10
SEPT. 10	WYOMING	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11A.M.	W, 52-17
SEPT. 17	OREGON	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	W, 35-32
SEPT. 24	@NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILLINOIS	6:30P.M.	W, 24-13
OCT. 1	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	W, 31-16
OCT. 15	@INDIANA	BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA	2:30P.M.	W, 27-22
OCT. 22	PURDUE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30P.M.	W, 27-14
OCT. 29	@WISCONSIN	MADISON, WISCONSIN	6P.M.	L, 23-17 OT
NOV. 5	@OHIO STATE	COLUMBUS, OHIO	7P.M.	L, 62-3
NOV. 12	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	6:30P.M.	BTN
NOV. 19	MARYLAND	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 25	@IOWA	IOWA CITY, IOWA	TBA	TBA

ALL GAMES ARE CST



ON THE COVER

Amber Rolfsen and her Husker volleyball teammates remain No. 1 in the country after defeating Penn State in five sets on Friday. The Huskers have now won on the Nittany Lions' home court in five sets two-straight seasons. The Huskers (22-1) are currently on a 10-game winning streak after also sweeping Rutgers on Saturday.

PHOTO BY MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER
RECRUITING EDITOR
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Big recruiting battles ahead for Nebraska

Nebraska finds itself in the midst of a turnaround in the second year under Mike Riley and it's reflective both on the field and in recruiting. The Huskers have assembled a solid, if incomplete, class already.

However, there are still some big recruits out there the Huskers are trying to land, but find themselves in a tough battle for several of them.

Here's a look at who the Huskers will be duking it out with off the field these next few months:

Isaiah Hodgins

Nebraska is in a three-team battle for this highly regarded three-star wide receiver. Hodgins is deciding between the Huskers, Oregon and Oregon State, having taken visits to each program over the past month.

The Huskers got the first shot and might've slowly become the prohibitive favorite until Hodgins visited Oregon and now it appears to be a two-team race. It was believed the northern California receiver was an Oregon lean prior, but the Huskers offer an immediate route to playing time given the heavy make-over at the receiver spot. Keith Williams has done good work here and the Huskers have connections to the family. Will it be enough?

Foster Sarell

The Huskers find themselves in the mix for the top player in the country. Nebraska is chasing Sarell's commitment against Stanford and Washington, but because of a previous relationship



Isaiah Hodgins is a three-star wide receiver out of Walnut Creek, Calif.

with Mike Riley and Mike Cavanaugh, Nebraska is more in pursuit than many could've guessed.

Sarell would be the biggest recruiting win for Nebraska in close to program history. The tackle would immediately slot in for the Huskers as a cornerstone to build around and a player the team would plan on using right away, even if that's slightly aggressive for an offensive lineman. Nebraska has several line commitments right now, but none are potential class changers the way Sarell would be.

Joseph Lewis

Another elite level recruit, Nebraska could use Lewis as a boost to a wide receiver room

that is going to take a hit with graduation. Lewis knows this and it's one of the reasons the Huskers stand out compared to Alabama, Arizona, Oklahoma and USC.

Lewis is a very well put together receiver. He'd physically be ready for collegiate ball very early in his career, though Williams would have to work with him on route running, as the difference between the offense at Augustus Hawkins and Nebraska are pretty strong. The Huskers are in good shape though, but will have to wait out several visits from Lewis over the next month.

Rahyme Johnson

A long-time target for Trent

Bray, Johnson is a linebacker the Huskers would love to get in the fold because of his versatility. Unfortunately, it just got harder for Nebraska with Oregon getting into the mix this past week. Now it appears the Ducks, plus Florida and Texas A&M are heavily involved.

Nebraska probably has the best relationship with Johnson. This isn't so much a guess, as it is built on the idea Bray has been working on the linebacker since the spring and it has been one of his few focuses, given the early commitments of Willie Hampton and Avery Roberts. That's allowed Bray to be pretty locked in to this recruitment. It's still too early to say what will happen with Johnson, but the Huskers are going to make this difficult for the defender.

Damion Daniels

The Huskers have been working on Daniels for awhile, getting him to visit in the summer and then bringing his family out for the Fresno State game at the beginning of the season. The Huskers are the frontrunners but will need to hold off a late charging Colorado and Iowa.

Daniels would bring Nebraska a nose tackle type body back to the middle. The Huskers have done well defensively this year, but are lacking the kind of nose front that can wreak havoc on a line of scrimmage. That's where someone like Daniels could really fit in for the Huskers, he's well sized and with the coaching from John Parrella, he could become a terror for offensive lines. **N**

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

STATE OF THE HUSKERS

Leadership to be tested after blowout loss



Read daily Husker reports from Michael Bruntz at HuskersIllustrated.com
Follow him on Twitter @michaelbruntz

COLUMBUS, OHIO — All season, Nebraska's players and coaches have talked about the leadership and ability to overcome adversity.

That has been displayed in a number of ways — especially off the field — but the Husker seniors are going to need to dig deep following an embarrassing loss to Ohio State on Saturday that flirted with the most lopsided in program history, and certainly took the shine off what had been a strong 2016 campaign.

Head coach Mike Riley was succinct in his comments after the game. Nebraska came out flat, couldn't find its rhythm — the result as much of a surprise to the head coach as the fans who saw the Huskers rise to No. 10 in the first college football playoff rankings released last week.

"What it looked like to me, which was very strange, I didn't feel we played very loose, we were tight early," Riley said. "We couldn't do a lot offensively and we couldn't get them off the field defensively."

Riley later: "The game came out of the blue to me."

The Huskers find themselves tied for the Big Ten West lead with Wisconsin, but in second place by virtue of the loss to Wisconsin in Madison to end October.

Nebraska faces an uncertain future, it's starting quarterback's status for next week in doubt after he was carted off the field in the second quarter.

Riley sounded positive after the loss that his strong senior class would take over and lead a team that was certainly dazed as they headed to the team buses outside Ohio Stadium.

"It's been a couple weeks since we've won and of course this is in different fashion than any game we've been in by a long shot," Riley said. "My thought is this team will respond. It's raw to say that, but we've played through hard games, hard times and played our best ball in fourth quarters of games. I'm going to continue to believe that's going to be the case about how we respond."

In the week leading up to the loss to Ohio

State, it was as though the Huskers had been talking about how they might handle this kind of a situation.

A host of seniors have helped Nebraska through adversity of a different kind.

Consider that before Nebraska had even played a snap of football against another team, the Huskers had already dealt with the death of a beloved and important veteran teammate, and had to fight the distraction of the DUI arrest of one of their assistant coaches.

Tight end Trey Foster, a member of Nebraska's tight senior class said the leadership of linebacker Josh Banderas and others has helped keep the team on track.

"They're just another example of how this senior class has been the heartbeat of the

team," Foster said. "If things start going south on defense, you got Nate (Gerry), Bando (Josh Banderas), Mike Rose (Michael Rose-Ivey), Ross Dzuris," Foster said. "You've just got seniors that have been here for a long time out here making plays."

Foster said earlier this week that the things that Nebraska has gone through this year will serve it well, especially now that Nebraska will need to win out and hope for help in the form of a Wisconsin loss to get to Indianapolis and the Big Ten title game.

"Just the past year, coming in with the new coach, going

through so many close games and not quite getting it and finally playing our best football of the season against UCLA, and then going through a long winter, long spring and just getting better. Then going through the summer workouts and getting better, then losing Foltz (Sam Foltz). Then Jerald (Foster) getting hurt and just getting nicked up and getting tested throughout the year even during the offseason.

"It just shows how much this team has been through and the success we've had so far just shows that even if things are going to come at us, we're still going to fight, we're still a team that's fighting every single down every single quarter."

After a loss that seemed to catch the Huskers and observers by surprise, Nebraska will need to lean on the leadership even more as they prepare for a tough Minnesota team at home.

"It's been a couple weeks since we've won, and of course this is in different fashion than any game we've been in by a long shot. My thought is this team will respond. It's raw to say that, but we've played through hard games, hard times and played our best ball in the fourth quarters of games."

Mike Riley
Nebraska head coach



10 questions

with **Chris Jones**

Story by Kevin Houck • Photos by Jimmy Rash & Michael Spomer

Q: On Thanksgiving, what's on your plate?

A: "Turkey, ham, collard greens, potato salad, baked beans and stuffing. The essentials."

Q: What's a dessert that you always find room for even when you're full?

A: "Apple pie. You can throw that on my plate on Thanksgiving too."

Q: What's one characteristic you want from the people close to you?

A: "Don't lie to me. Just don't lie me and we're good for life."

Q: If I gave you money to go wherever you wanted, where would you pick and why?

A: "I would probably go to Africa. Just so I can see what it's like. Get a perspective on life."

Q: Before the team heads into the locker room during pregame, where did that dance between Josh Kalu and you come from?

A: "I don't know man. That's on Kalu. It was his idea. He likes to dance. It's just Kalu being himself."

Q: On Halloween, what costume did you see in

person or on social media that you liked most?

A: "The best Halloween costume I had seen was a baby dressed as a lion but it was like perfect. It was just like perfect. I stared at it wondering how long that took to get all together. It was perfect."

Q: What is the best superhero movie you've seen?

A: "The best superhero movie I have seen is Superman. He's always been one of my favorites of all them. I just like them good or bad."

Q: What app on your phone do you use the most?

A: "I have to say Instagram. It's how I see what my people are always up too. I like to stay in touch, especially with people back in Florida."

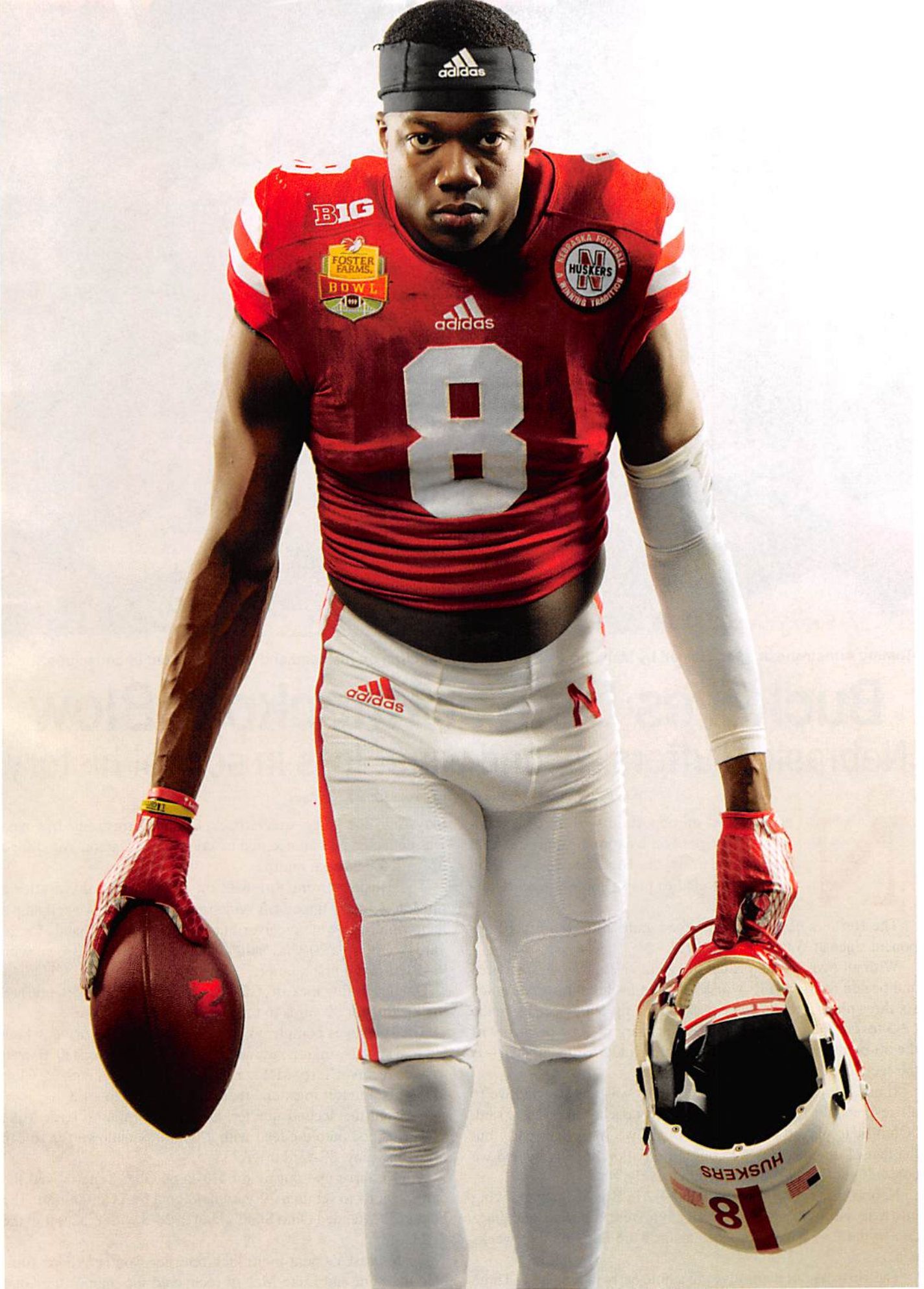
Q: Off the field, what's something that interests you like history, cars or politics?

A: "Sports. Doesn't matter the sport. I'm a competitive guy so that stuff never gets old to me."

Q: What NBA team is going to surprise everyone this year?

A: "The Lakers. It's a young team I feel like. I think they're going to surprise some people this year with their play."







Tommy Armstrong Jr. gets tackled by Malik Hooker right before handing on his head and being knocked unconscious.

Buckeyes Deliver Knockout Blow

Nebraska suffers second-worst loss in school history

Story by Kevin Houck • Photos by Michael Spomer and Jimmy Rash

Nebraska had an opportunity to make a statement on the road on a national stage and hold their own fate in the Big Ten West division when it traveled to play Ohio State on Saturday night.

The Huskers have not won a road game against a top 10 opponent since at Washington in 1997.

With all eyes on the primetime game, Nebraska was battered and beaten for one of its worst losses in program history. A pick six three plays into the game was just the tip of the iceberg in the 62-3 loss at Ohio State. The 59-point margin — one point shy of the 60-point loss to Texas Tech in 2004 under Bill Callahan — is the second worst loss in program history.

"I am going to start out by saying that was real bad and we're all responsible for it," Nebraska head coach Mike Riley said. "Ohio State played real well. I thought we were tight early but the fact of the matter is we couldn't do a lot offensively and we couldn't get them off the field defensively."

Nebraska is now 7-2 overall and 4-2 in Big Ten play, moving into a tie with Wisconsin in the Big Ten West, but in second place due to the 23-17 overtime loss against the Badgers two weeks ago.

The Huskers put themselves in a hole early in the game. Three

plays into the game, quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s pass was deflected and intercepted by cornerback Damon Webb for a 36-yard touchdown return.

The Huskers were fortunate on their second drive after a third-down pass tipped off wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp's hand right into wide receiver Stanley Morgan Jr.'s hands for 26 yards to set up a 20-yard field goal by kicker Drew Brown with 7:45 left in the first quarter.

On the ensuing kickoff, Ohio State's Parris Campbell returned the kickoff for 39 yards to the Ohio State 43-yard line.

The Buckeyes completed a third-and-20 on the drive, which led to a seven-yard touchdown pass from quarterback JT Barrett to wide receiver Terry McLaurin on third-and-goal with 3:16 left in the first quarter to extend the Buckeyes lead to 14-3.

Early in the second quarter, Ohio State running back Mike Weber tacked onto the lead with 23-yard touchdown run to cap off a nine-play, 83-yard drive.

After a three-and-out by the Huskers, Ohio State moved the ball 20 yards to set up a 29-yard field goal by Tyler Durbin. The field goal extended Ohio State's lead to 24-3 with 8:22 left in the first half.

On Nebraska's next punt, kick returner Dontre Wilson fumbled the punt and Luke McNitt recovered the punt at the Ohio



Ohio State quarterback JT Barrett stands in the pocket and delivers a strike with Kevin Maurice bearing down on him.

State 38-yard line.

The Huskers would suffer a huge loss on the drive. On third down and seven, Armstrong ran for the first down but was hit as he ran out of bounds. Armstrong was left unconscious for a few minutes and he was taken to the hospital on a stretcher for further evaluation.

Armstrong returned back to the sideline early in the third quarter.

Senior quarterback Ryker Fyfe replaced Armstrong in the game. Four plays later, the Huskers faced fourth-and-1. Fyfe faked the handoff and rolled to his right but was hit as he threw the ball and the pass fell well short of the line of scrimmage.

"We got stuffed on third-and-1 and we felt like we had a pretty good play action," Langsdorf said. "We just didn't block the defensive end."

The Buckeyes weren't done before halftime. Barrett led a 15-play, 83-yard drive ending in a one-yard touchdown pass from Barrett to wide receiver Curtis Samuel with three seconds left before halftime. The Huskers went into halftime trailing 31-3.

"I thought he was poised," safety Nate Gerry said of Barrett. "He's a big-time quarterback. He made plays and their offense runs through him. If he has a good day then the offense has a good day. I thought he had some time back there especially on his passes and we couldn't stop the run either so they took advantage of it."

The Buckeyes received the ball to start the second half and on the first play from scrimmage Barrett found Samuel deep over the middle for a 75-yard touchdown. The play was the longest play the Blackshirts have given up all season.

"We knew what Curtis Samuel could do," defensive coordina-

tor Mark Banker said. "We expected his athletic ability... He's a heck of a football player with his speed and athleticism."

Once again Nebraska's offense couldn't get anything going, which led to a punt.

Ohio State took over at its own 13-yard line and the Buckeyes capped off a nine-play, 87-yard drive with six-yard touchdown pass from Barrett to wide receiver Noah Brown with 10 minutes left in the third quarter.

Durbin added a 29-yard field goal with 1:35 left in the third quarter to extend the lead to 48-3.

On the ensuing drive, Fyfe was intercepted by safety Malik Hooker, who returned the interception 48 yards for a touchdown with 34 seconds left before the fourth quarter.

Nebraska moved inside the Ohio State 10-yard line on its next possession but Westerkamp was stopped a yard before the first down marker at the two-yard line on fourth down.

Quarterback Joe Burrow replaced Barrett at the start of Ohio State's next drive. Burrow ended the drive with a 12-yard quarterback draw with 7:19 remaining in the fourth quarter to extend the lead to 62-3.

After a Nebraska three-and-out, the Buckeyes ran out the clock for a 62-3 victory. Besides the game-ending drive, Ohio State scored on every possession including its two interception returns.

"It's been a couple weeks since we've won, and of course this is in different fashion than any game we've been in by a long shot," Riley said. "My thought is this team will respond. It's raw to say that, but we've played through hard games, hard times and played our best ball in fourth quarters of games. I'm going to continue to believe that's going to be the case about how we respond."

Buckeyes' defense hit Huskers early and often

STORY BY BOB HAMAR | PHOTO BY MICHAEL SPOMER

Ohio State hit Nebraska often and hard Saturday night at Ohio Stadium and it resulted in the second-worst loss in school history.

The Buckeyes returned two interceptions for touchdowns in their 62-3 victory over the Huskers. The first one was a 36-yard TD return by Damon Webb on the third play of the game.

"That was a great momentum boost to start," Meyer said of Webb's TD. "Then the offense scored on our first drive. Maybe we scored on every drive. We didn't punt did we?"

No, the Buckeyes never punted, but they did add another defensive touchdown in the third quarter when Malik Hooker picked off a tipped pass by Ryker Fyfe pass and went 48 yards for another touchdown."

It was a school-record sixth interception return for a touchdown by the Buckeyes this season.

"We get a tipped ball," Nebraska offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf said. "We were trying to throw a slant. The guy covering the back puts his hand up. The guy playing man coverage on the running back tips the ball.

"It's an unfortunate play. I don't think it's one you say, 'We have to throw all that out. I think we had a chance if we hit some of those slants. It's a bad way to start for sure. You're on the road in a tough environment and you get the crowd going over something like that. It's hard to overcome that."

The Huskers just couldn't get much of anything going against the Ohio State defense. Nebraska finished the game with just 204 total yards, including 78 on the ground.

The only time Nebraska got the offense going was on its second possession when the Huskers went 72 yards in 15 plays, culminating in a 20-yard field goal by Drew Brown.

"I thought we did a pretty good job on the second series and kind of put together some runs," Langsdorf said. "The negative runs are what we have to eliminate. If we can get the four- and five-yard gains we're just so much better



Jordan Westerkamp makes an acrobatic catch as the Huskers threw a lot of 50-50 balls against the Buckeyes defense.

off. They made that hard tonight."

The Ohio State defensive line controlled the line of scrimmage much of the game.

"They're good and they did some stunts that gave us some problems,"

Langsdorf said. "They're a talented team. No question they played well. I don't think we played very well. We have to have a better game plan and make some plays. It was one of those days that snowballed early."



Freedom Akinmoladun, Dedrick Young and Kevin Maurice try to tackle Ohio State's Mike Weber.

Blackshirts struggle to slow down Buckeyes

STORY BY BOB HAMAR | PHOTO BY JIMMY RASH

The Nebraska defense had no luck against the Ohio State offense Saturday in a 62-3 loss at Ohio Stadium.

The Buckeyes rolled up 590 yards and scored on every possession except one against the Huskers. Nebraska defensive coordinator Mark Banker will be looking for some answers this week.

"If I had answers or magic dust I would have sprinkled it somewhere along the line," Banker said. "There were just so many things along the way that didn't go our way. We missed a sack early on. We missed a tackle behind the line of scrimmage early on. It kind of compounded itself in different places in the first half and it

compounded into that outcome."

The Huskers never could control Ohio State quarterback J.T. Barrett, who completed 26-of-38 passes for 290 yards and four touchdowns, or receiver Curtis Samuel who had eight catches for 137 yards and two TDs. Banker was not surprised by Samuel's performance, who was a backup to Ezekiel Elliott last season.

"A year ago he was Ezekiel's backup. They found a spot for him at slot receiver. This year they probably have a hard time balancing that as well, making sure that (Mike Weber) gets the ball, that (Samuel) gets the ball at their respective positions."

Banker said the Huskers tried some different things in the second half to try and slow down the Buckeyes, but nothing

worked.

"We had some subtle line moves, different ways to cancel the gaps inside," Banker said. "A big thing we talked about at half-time was about the tentativeness and different ways to attack things."

After a performance like that, it could be tempting to just throw away the video and not watch it at all. Banker said that won't happen.

"I think it's important to watch the things and say, 'Hey, this is correctable. This is an issue, this is something that we need to address,'" Banker said. The most important thing we can do as a coaching staff is give the players the technique or whatever it might be to put themselves in a positive situation so we can play better next week."

Ohio State 62, Nebraska 3

Nov. 5, 2016 at Ohio Stadium in Columbus, Ohio

Attendance: 108,750

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	Total
Nebraska	3	0	0	0	3
Ohio State	14	17	24	7	62

Qtr	Time	Scoring Play	V-H
1st	13:26	OSU - Webb, Damon 36 yd interception return (Durbin, Tyler kick)	0 - 7
	07:45	NEB - Brown, Drew 20 yd field goal, 15-72 5:41	3 - 7
	03:16	OSU - McLaurin, Terry 7 yd pass from Barrett, J.T. (Durbin, Tyler kick), 10-57 4:19	3 - 14
2nd	12:21	OSU - Weber, Mike 23 yd run (Durbin, Tyler kick), 9-83 3:25	3 - 21
	08:22	OSU - Durbin, Tyler 28 yd field goal, 9-20 2:52	3 - 24
	00:03	OSU - Samuel, Curtis 1 yd pass from Barrett, J.T. (Durbin, Tyler kick), 15-85 3:39	3 - 31
3rd	14:48	OSU - Samuel, Curtis 75 yd pass from Barrett, J.T. (Durbin, Tyler kick), 1-75 0:12	3 - 38
	10:00	OSU - Brown, Noah 6 yd pass from Barrett, J.T. (Durbin, Tyler kick), 9-87 3:39	3 - 45
	01:35	OSU - Durbin, Tyler 28 yd field goal, 14-41 7:25	3 - 48
	00:34	OSU - Hooker, Malik 48 yd interception return (Durbin, Tyler kick)	3 - 55
4th	07:19	OSU - Burrow, Joe 12 yd run (Durbin, Tyler kick), 11-98 5:21	3 - 62



Nebraska's Stanley Morgan Jr. fights for extra yardage against the Buckeyes.

Team Statistics



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Cethan Carter returned to action for Nebraska for the first time since the Illinois game.



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Back-up quarterback Ryker Fyfe hands the ball off to Terrell Newby.

	NEB	OSU
FIRST DOWNS	9	34
Rushing	2	15
Passing	6	17
Penalty	1	2
NET YARDS RUSHING	78	238
Rushing Attempts	24	42
Average Per Rush	3.2	5.7
Rushing Touchdowns	0	2
Yards Gained Rushing	89	240
Yards Lost Rushing	11	2
NET YARDS PASSING	126	352
Completions-Attempts-Int	9-33-2	32-44-0
Average Per Attempt	3.8	8.0
Average Per Completion	14.0	11.0
Passing Touchdowns	0	4
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	204	590
Total offense plays	57	86
Average Gain Per Play	3.6	6.9
Fumbles: Number-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties: Number-Yards	4-43	4-35
PUNTS-YARDS	6-251	0-0
Average Yards Per Punt	41.8	0.0
Net Yards Per Punt	40.5	0.0
Inside 20	3	0
50+ Yards	3	0
Touchbacks	0	0
Fair catch	1	0
KICKOFFS-YARDS	2-126	11-630
Average Yards Per Kickoff	63.0	57.3
Net Yards Per Kickoff	31.0	40.6
Touchbacks	1	2
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD	0-0-0	3-8-0
Average Per Return	0.0	2.7
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	8-133-0	1-39-0
Average Per Return	16.6	39.0
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	2-84-2
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	0-0-0
Miscellaneous Yards	0	0
Possession Time	22:42	37:18
1st Quarter	9:45	5:15
2nd Quarter	5:50	9:10
3rd Quarter	3:44	11:16
4th Quarter	3:23	11:37
Third-Down Conversions	5 of 16	11 of 15
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 2	1 of 1
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	1-3	6-6
Touchdowns	0-3	4-6
Field goals	1-3	2-6
Sacks By: Number-Yards	0-0	0-0
PAT Kicks	0-0	8-8
Field Goals	1-1	2-2
Points off turnovers	0	14



Above: The empty Horseshoe was a lot less intimidating environment Saturday afternoon than at game time when 108,750 fans crammed in. It was the fourth largest crowd NU has ever played before. Left: A Nebraska fans holds up a Sam Foltz sign during the game.

Individual Statistics

Nebraska

Rushing	No.	Gain	Loss	Net	TD	Lg	Avg
Newby, Terrell	13	55	1	54	0	17	4.2
Armstrong Jr.	4	19	0	19	0	11	4.8
Wilbon, Mikale	3	14	1	13	0	9	4.3
Pierson-El, D.	1	0	1	-1	0	0	-1.0
Ozigbo, Devine	3	1	8	-7	0	1	-2.3
Totals	24	89	11	78	0	17	3.2

Passing	C-A-I	Yds	TD	Long	Sack
Fyfe, Ryker	5-18-1	52	0	18	0
Armstrong Jr.	4-15-1	74	0	32	0
Totals	9-33-2	126	0	32	0

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	Long
Westerkamp, J.	4	51	0	32
Morgan Jr., S.	3	56	0	26
Carter, Cethan	2	19	0	10
Totals	9	126	0	32

Punting	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	In20	TB
Lightbourn, C.	6	251	41.8	53	3	0
Totals	6	251	41.8	53	3	0

Returns	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg
Bryant, Tre	0	0	0	7	124	24	0	0	0
McNitt, Luke	0	0	0	1	9	9	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	8	133	24	0	0	0

Field goals	Qtr	Time	Dist	Result
Brown, Drew	1st	07:45	20 yards	Good

Kickoffs	No.	Yards	Avg	TB	OB
Brown, Drew	2	126	63.0	1	0

All-purpose	Run	Rcv	KR	PR	IR	Total
Bryant, Tre	0	0	124	0	0	124
Morgan Jr., S.	0	56	0	0	0	56
Newby, Terrell	54	0	0	0	0	54
Westerkamp, J.	0	51	0	0	0	51

Ohio State

Rushing	No.	Gain	Loss	Net	TD	Lg	Avg
McCall, Demario	16	75	2	73	0	10	4.6
Weber, Mike	11	72	0	72	1	24	6.5
Samuel, Curtis	5	41	0	41	0	16	8.2
Barrett, J.T.	8	39	0	39	0	20	4.9
Burrow, Joe	2	13	0	13	1	12	6.5
Totals	42	240	2	238	2	24	5.7

Passing	C-A-I	Yds	TD	Long	Sack
Barrett, J.T.	26-38-0	290	4	75	0
Burrow, Joe	6-6-0	62	0	26	0
Totals	32-44-0	352	4	75	0

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	Long
Samuel, Curtis	8	137	2	75
Hill, K.J.	5	66	0	26
Wilson, Dontre	4	44	0	22
Baugh, Marcus	4	35	0	16
Alexander, A.J.	3	24	0	9
Smith, Corey	3	2	0	6
Brown, Noah	2	14	1	8
Weber, Mike	1	15	0	15
Mack, Austin	1	8	0	8
McLaurin, Terry	1	7	1	7
Totals	32	352	4	75

Punting	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	In20	TB
Totals	0	0	0.0	0	0	0

Returns	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg	No	Yds	Lg
McCall, Demario	1	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilson, Dontre	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Samuel, Curtis	1	-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Webb, Damon	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	36	36
Campbell, P	0	0	0	1	39	39	0	0	0
Hooker, Malik	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	48	48
Totals	3	8	15	1	39	39	2	84	48

Field goals	Qtr	Time	Dist	Result
Durbin, Tyler	2nd	08:22	28 yards	Good
Durbin, Tyler	3rd	01:35	28 yards	Good

Kickoffs	No.	Yards	Avg	TB	OB
Durbin, Tyler	11	630	57.3	2	1

All-purpose	Run	Rcv	KR	PR	IR	Total
Samuel, Curtis	41	137	0	-5	0	173
McCall, Demario	73	0	0	15	0	88
Weber, Mike	72	15	0	0	0	87
Hill, K.J.	0	66	0	0	0	66

Defensive Statistics

#	Nebraska	Solo	Ast	Total	Sacks-Yds	TFL-Yds	FF	FR-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	Blks	QBH
25	Gerry, Nathan	9	0	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Kalu, Joshua	7	2	9	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
52	Banderas, Josh	2	7	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1A	Rose-Ivey, M.	4	4	8	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	Williams, Aaron	3	5	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8A	Jones, Chris	5	0	5	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
49	Weber, Chris	1	4	5	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
91	Akinmoladun, F.	0	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Williams, K.	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
88	Dzuris, Ross	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Young II, D.	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	Maurice, Kevin	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	Reed, Antonio	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1C	Joseph, Boaz	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Newby, Marcus	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
96	Davis, Carlos	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
94	Davis, Khalil	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	Neal, DaiShon	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
97	Rath, Logan	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
41	McNitt, Luke	1	0	1	-	-	-	1-0	-	-	-	-
4A	Anderson, Avery	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Gifford, Luke	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2A	Davis, Alex	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Lee Jr., Eric	0	1	1	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
44	Stoltenberg, M.	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals		45	42	87	0.0-0	4-5	0	1-0	0-0	2	0	0

#	Ohio State	Solo	Ast	Total	Sacks-Yds	TFL-Yds	FF	FR-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	Blks	QBH
6	Hubbard, Sam	3	2	5	-	2-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
0B	Fuller, Jordan	2	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	Worley, Chris	4	0	4	-	1-6	-	-	-	1	-	-
34	Smith, Erick	1	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	Hooker, Malik	3	0	3	-	-	-	-	1-48	1	-	-
7	Webb, Damon	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	1-36	-	-	-
12	Ward, Denzel	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
17	Baker, Jerome	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	McMillan, R	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
86	Jones, Dre'mont	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32	Goins, Elijaah	0	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
38	Fada, Craig	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
77	Hill, Michael	1	1	2	-	2-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
1F	Cooper, J	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Arnette, Damon	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Berry, Rashod	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Conley, Gareon	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
92	Durbin, Tyler	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
53	Hamilton, Davon	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
39	Harrison, Malik	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Holmes, Jalyn	0	1	1	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	1
1A	Mack, Austin	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
67	Landers, Robert	0	1	1	-	1-0	-	-	-	-	-	1
59	Lewis, Tyquan	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
0A	Lattimore, M	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
48	Burger, Joe	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Totals		26	30	56	0.0-0	7-11	0	0-0	2-84	10	0	3

RUSHING OFFENSE: As bad as the passing offense was it made Nebraska's rush offense look even worse. The Huskers barely moved the ball on the ground, netting a paltry 78 yards on 24 carries. Terrell Newby ran hard, finishing with 54 runs, including a 17-yard run. The senior back only lost one yard on any of his carries, but there just wasn't enough happening to sustain drives. Nebraska's best play, a quarterback draw, resulted in Tommy Armstrong's injury and sufficiently killed the team's night. — *Michael Schaefer*

F

PASSING OFFENSE: The Huskers managed to toss two touchdowns on Saturday, but unfortunately for Tommy Armstrong Jr. and Ryker Fyfe both throws went to Ohio State and were swiftly turned into points. When trying to toss it to their own guys, Nebraska was woefully unsuccessful, completing just 27 percent of its passes. That's never going to get it done. The quarterbacks weren't helped by Nebraska's receivers much, as there were several drops throughout the game, including a few big plays down the field that could've sparked the Huskers, or at least lead to points. — *Michael Schaefer*

F

RUSHING DEFENSE: The Nebraska defense that looked so strong against Wisconsin's run game at times, looked lost against the Buckeyes. The arm tackling was back and Nebraska didn't play with attitude or swarm well to the ball. Ohio State finished with 238 rushing yards, and it could have been more if Barrett wanted to take off when options were covered down field. Ohio State averaged 5.6 yards per carry. That won't cut it. — *Michael Bruntz*

F

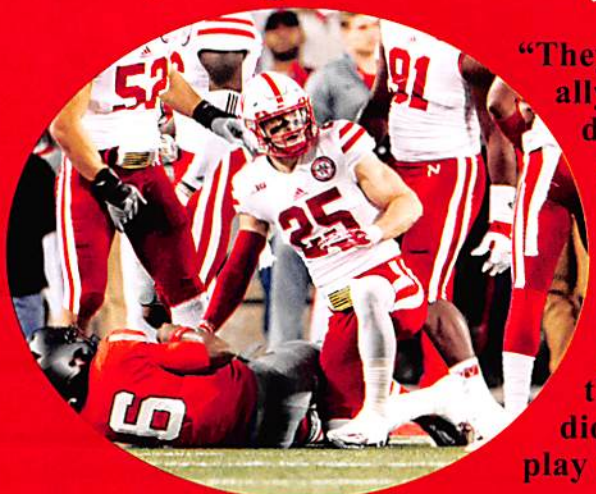
PASSING DEFENSE: Coming into Saturday's game, there had been concerns about Ohio State's lack of a vertical passing game. Those concerns were put to rest Saturday as JT Barrett finished 26-for-38 for four touchdowns and no interceptions. Barrett was hardly harassed in the pocket and Nebraska's defensive backs were unable to cover with a lack of pressure up front. — *Michael Bruntz*

F

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS: Caleb Lightbourn punted six times for an average of 41.8 yards and pinned Ohio State inside its 20-yard line three times. He also kicked a punt that was muffed and represented one of Nebraska's biggest forays into Ohio State territory on Saturday. Drew Brown was also successful on his only kick attempt, which ended up helping Nebraska avoid its first shut out since 1996 at Arizona State. — *Michael Bruntz*

D

Quoting Nebraska safety Nate Gerry:



"They didn't really do that much different than anybody else that we really played. They just got some talented athletes over there. We just didn't come to play football today."

Game Notes



ARMSTRONG RETURNS TO STADIUM AFTER INJURY

When quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. was taken in an ambulance on a stretcher late in the second quarter the initial thought was to be the worst.

According to Nebraska medical personnel, quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. was briefly knocked unconscious. He was moving all extremities and talking while on the field. He is being taken to a local hospital for further evaluation.

Armstrong was released from the hospital during halftime and returned to the Husker sideline in the third quarter.

Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley said it's unknown of his availability heading into next week.

"It's too early to tell exactly what the situation is for next week playing football but the good situation was that he came back out."

If Armstrong is out, Ryker Fyfe will be the starting quarterback.

"He's a guy that's been a backup all year and he's been playing and preparing so I don't think there's going to be a bunch of different stuff," offensive coordinator Danny Langsdorf said. "We're going to have to cater it to him to if, in fact, we don't have Tommy."

ARMSTRONG SETS TOTAL YARDAGE SCHOOL RECORD

Prior to being knocked out, Armstrong accounted for 93 yards of total offense, including 19 rushing yards and 74 passing yards. He increased his career

total to 10,254 yards, setting a new Nebraska career record in that category. He surpassed the previous record of 10,233 yards by Taylor Martinez. Armstrong set the record on a 32-yard second-quarter completion to Jordan Westerkamp.

Armstrong also moved to into a tie for ninth in Big Ten history in total offense, passing Martinez and tying Iowa's Chuck Long (10,254 yards).

NEBRASKA PLAYERS MOVE UP ALL-TIME CHARTS

Nebraska senior receiver Jordan Westerkamp caught four passes for 51 yards. Westerkamp increased his career receptions total to 149, moving him within 17 receptions of second place on the NU career receptions list. Westerkamp increased his career yardage total to 2,289 moving him within 187 yards of second place on the NU career chart. Westerkamp made a catch for the 33rd-straight game.

Senior running back Terrell Newby rushed for 54 yards, increasing his career total to 2,002. He is the 29th Husker with 2,000 career rushing yards.

Junior kicker Drew Brown connected on a first-quarter field goal to give him 44 in his career, good for sole possession of third place in school history. Brown increased his career scoring total to 266 moving him past Johnny Rodgers (264) into eighth place on the NU scoring list.

BUCKEYES DO A VARIETY OF TRIBUTES FOR FOLTZ

Ohio State had one of the most extensive Sam Foltz tributes yet as the Buckeyes students, band and football team got in on the events.

Prior to Nebraska arriving, Ohio State painted a SF27 logo on the wall leading to the Nebraska locker room.

Prior to the game, Ohio State presented the Foltz family with an Ohio State helmet with 27 stickers on one side of it. During halftime, the Ohio State marching band ended its performance by going into a SF27 formation.

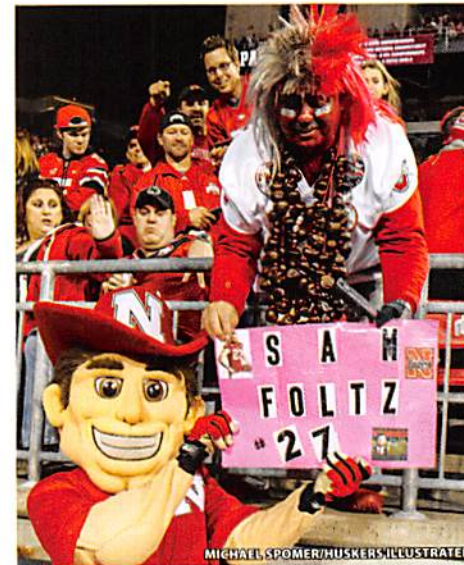
During the game, students in the Ohio State section behind the goal posts, simultaneously held up flip cards that spelled out SF 27. There also were many No. 27 signs that were held up by Ohio State fans throughout the game.



The Ohio State Marching Band concluded its halftime show with a SF27 formation.



Clockwise from above: Defensive end Alex Davis touches the SF27 emblem that Ohio State painted on the wall leading to the Nebraska locker room. Larry Lokai, aka OSU Buckeyeman, holds up a Sam Foltz sign he made. Ohio State gave NU a special helmet with 27 stickers on it.



Ohio State 62, Nebraska 3



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Clockwise from left: Tommy Armstrong Jr. gives a thumbs up as he was carted off the field. Joshua Kalu upends an Ohio State player. Armstrong runs back onto the field in the third quarter. Players look on as Armstrong is carted off in the second quarter.



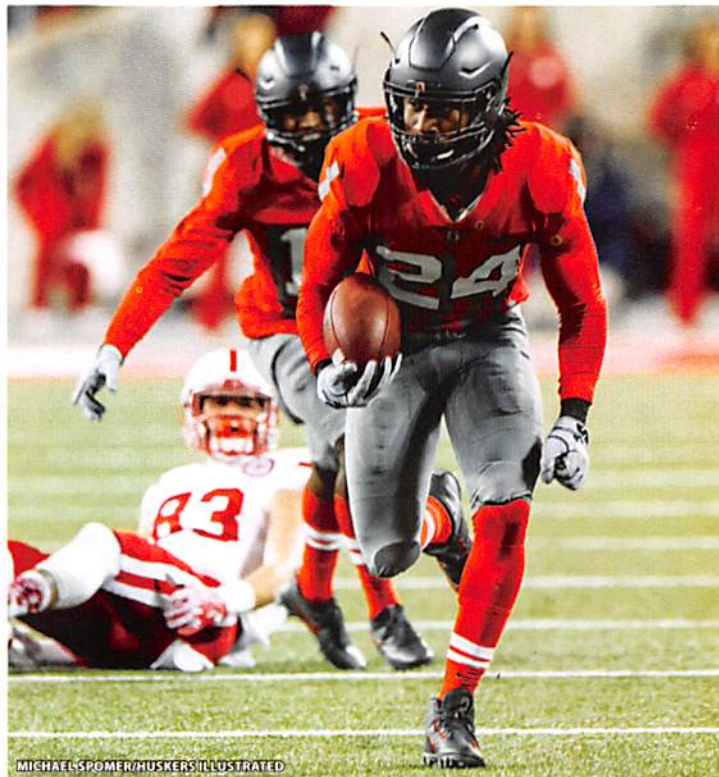
MICHAEL SPOMER/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



MICHAEL SPOMER/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



MICHAEL SPOMER/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Clockwise from above: Bryan Reimers watches from the ground as Malik Hooker returns the interception for a score. Jordan Westerkamp draws a pass interference call as he stretches for a pass. Luke McNitt gave NU a sliver of hope with his fumble recovery of a muffed punt in the second quarter.

2 Minute Drill

**MARCUS
NEWBY
FILLS
ROLE
ON THIRD
DOWNS**



JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Compiled by Kevin Houck

On Wisconsin's first drive of the game they faced a third and 5 at their own 35-yard line and quarterback Alex Hornibrook went to his go-to receiving option in tight end Troy Fumagalli right at the first down marker.

Junior linebacker Marcus Newby put his hands through the ball as Fumagalli tried to cradle the ball into his body and Newby forced an incomplection to set up the Badgers first punt of the game.

In last seasons loss against Wisconsin, Fumagalli caught six passes for 60 yards and a touchdown.

"Third down is definitely a big role for me within all the blitz packages and the cover packages that we have," Newby said. "Especially Wisconsin was a big week for me. We knew their tight end. We knew they liked to pass to him and basically is the quarterbacks go to. Once you have the opportunity to be on the field you have to present it and do your job."

Newby started six games at linebacker last season but with Josh Banderas, Dedrick Young and Chris Weber as the only available linebackers and Michael Rose-Ivey missing much of the season, the group as a whole suffered groin and hamstring injuries throughout the season.

After a year of recruiting, linebackers coach Trent Bray has found depth throughout the group. The Huskers now sub up to five linebackers throughout the game with each having their own role in certain situations.

"Guys aren't having to play 80 snaps a game," Bray said. "We can get the starters around 50-60 snaps which is big. That's 20 extra plays your watching and not banging your body around and all those things."

Another big reason is Bray had Young and Newby transform their bodies in the offseason. Both slimmed down their body fat and increased muscle which made a 10 pound weight loss for each of them.

"I think they've been healthier," Bray said about their transformation. "They have haven't suffered the hamstrings or groin pulls that we had a year ago and then they are just moving better. Really the biggest thing is in coverage and then in their pass rushing because they're just moving better. So those things have really improved."

The biggest advantage that came out of the weight loss is Newby's endurance. Newby said he can go throughout the game without his body fatiguing.

"I feel like I am definitely a lot more explosive and I can run," Newby said. "Just me not being out of breathe all the time and me having endurance. My body feels a lot better than it did last year this time. I will definitely say me losing that 10 pounds, I feel a lot better than I did last year."

As a third-down linebacker, Newby has 14 tackles, a sack and two tackles for loss in eight games this season.

Newby said spending more time in the film room has helped his production this season which has increased as he has matured as a football player.

"It's came a ways," Newby said. "Just me being detailed and my leverage on them. From inside leverage just make sure you hit his inside shoulder and know what route their

Continued on Pg. 26

HI'S TOP 5

NEBRASKA CAREER TACKLE LEADERS



Senior safety Nathan Gerry had a season-high-tying nine tackles against Ohio State to increase his career total to 258, good for eighth place on the Nebraska career tackles list and second among Husker defensive backs.

1	Barrett Ruud LB, 2001-04	432
2	Jerry Murtaugh LB, 1968-70	342
3	Mike Brown S, 1996-99	287
4	Lavonte David LB, 2010-11	285
5	Lee Kuntz LB, 1976-78	276



Terrell Newby bursts through one of the few large holes the Husker offensive line was able to create. Newby finished with 51 rushing yards



in the game and also went over 2,000 career rushing yards in the game.



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Aaron Williams has become one of the most versatile players on the Nebraska defense.

Continued from Pg. 23

running. Once the route comes try and make a play.”

Once Newby has an idea of what the offense is doing, he’s excelled in those critical situations because he’s able to utilize his increased speed against slower opponents in both coverage and blitz packages.

“It lets me free up my speed and have me going so I can have an advantage to myself too,” Newby said. “I can beat that center, tackle or guard and get to the quarterback. And it’s the same thing when I am in coverage.”

AARON WILLIAMS MOLDS INTO VERSATILE PLAYER

Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley was quick to give defensive back Aaron Williams praise on Monday after watching the Wisconsin game film.

“Aaron Williams is a playmaker,” Riley said. “He’s a good football player and does a nice job.”

That’s high praise coming from Riley. Williams has been a do-it all player for

the Blackshirts. He has played primarily nickelback but due to his ability against the run, Williams played free safety last week against the Badgers when the Huskers were in their 4-3 Base set.

It was just under two years ago, Williams graduated high school early and enrolled at Nebraska in January. And then in Nebraska’s first game against BYU he started.

“You kind of forget that he’s only a sophomore, a true sophomore,” defensive coordinator Mark Banker said.

But Williams is still learning about all the things it takes to play defense. He’s also grasping things faster than most players because of his versatility he’s already shown in his two seasons at Nebraska.

The Atlanta native can play both safety positions and nickel. He said switching between both has actually made him progress faster.

“I personally think it helps me because you know what to expect when you’re at safety, because you’ve got time

to see the whole play, and when you’re at nickel it happens much faster,” Williams said. “So if you can maybe see it faster, it can help you at safety.”

Williams versatility in the defense has made Banker take notice. When asked about Williams, Banker couldn’t help but smile.

“Now that’s somebody, his progress and his level of play is dramatically different than when he started,” Banker said. “I mean, he’s balling out.”

The sophomore has three interceptions and 29 tackles on the season, which are both already more than his total last year.

As to becoming the total package, Williams has a far ways to go but Banker likes that about him. He knows what he’s good at but he’s also not afraid to work at things he has a difficult time with.

“Now, does he make mistakes? Absolutely,” Banker said. “But what I love about a player like Aaron ... he works on the things that he is deficient at, and wants to get better.”



JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Chris Weber (49) and Eric Lee Jr. make a tackle against the Buckeyes.

The one thing the Husker defensive staff has tried to install since they arrived is confidence. You're going to get beat on some plays that's just football. But it's how you respond that will make the difference in the game.

Confidence is one thing Williams isn't lacking.

"My confidence level is going to be there," he said. "Like as a DB, I feel like it's a boxer. Going against a receiver all the time, you're going to win some, you're going to lose some, and you just can't get down on your losses."

Maybe one of the biggest things Williams still needs to learn heading to Ohio State is the stadiums he's about to play in. Williams said he doesn't know much about the environment heading into Saturday.

"I just actually found out their stadium is called the Horseshoe," Williams said. "I really don't know a lot about it. But I know it's a big game. A prime-time game. It's something as a child you

dream about. It's exciting. You just have to prepare for it.

"You gotta come ready to compete so you go to come in focused on yourself and try not let that get to you and believe in your abilities. It's going to be a good game."

RILEY, GERRY MAKE CUT FOR POSTSEASON AWARDS

Coming off a game with two interceptions, Nebraska senior safety Nathan Gerry is now on the watch list for an award for the country's best defensive player.

Gerry is one of 18 semifinalists in the running for the Chuck Bednarik Award, which goes to the outstanding defensive player of the year. Gerry is leading the team with four interceptions and is second on the team with 50 tackles and six tackles for loss.

"Just being recognized on a national stage like that, it's a dream for me," Gerry said. "Being from South Dakota you

don't really expect things like that and you don't see many people from small cities, small towns recognized on a big stage."

The only Husker to ever win the award was defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh in 2009.

Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley was also recognized. He is one of 18 head coaches named to the Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year midseason watch list.

THREE HUSKERS EARN ACADEMIC ALL-DISTRICT

Three Husker defensive players were honored as members of the CoSIDA Academic All-District 7 football team,

Sophomore defensive tackle Mick Stoltzenberg, senior defensive tackle Logan Rath and junior linebacker Chris Weber earned the honor. This is Weber's second-consecutive year to earn the honor.

The three selected to the Academic All-District 7 team will advance to the

national ballot for the CoSIDA Academic All-America Team.

Stoltenberg has a 3.45 cumulative grade-point average management. The Gretna native has 16 tackles, including three tackles for loss.

Rath is a six-time member of the Nebraska Scholar Athlete Honor Roll selection and has a 3.65 grade-point average in agricultural economics.

Weber carries a 3.96 cumulative grade-point average in nutrition science and has eight tackles this season. He is a six-time Nebraska Scholar-Athlete Honor Roll selection and a two-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree.

Nebraska has a long-standing history of academic honors, leading the nation in Academic All-Americans across all sports with 325, including 111 football honorees. Nebraska has had 73 first-team Academic All-Americans in school history. The 2016 CoSIDA Academic All-America team for Division I football will be announced on Dec 1.

HUSKERS TO PLAY FRIDAY NIGHT GAME IN FUTURE

The Big Ten Conference announced it plans to begin to play six Friday night games per season starting in 2017.

The decision stems from new television deals with ESPN, ABC and Fox.

Many players and fans didn't take the news lightly because of the effects it has on recruiting and high school football.

Nebraska announced they will play one home game during one of the seasons between 2017 and 2019. Schools such as Penn State and Michigan have come out publicly against the new deal.

Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley said he wasn't completely for the move but understands it gives schools more exposure.

"Realistically in this day, it's absolutely probably a very good move, and it is going to give our conference a chance to get more of our teams exposed everywhere, which our conference has done the very best job of any conference in the country doing that," Riley said.

"So there's always pluses and minuses in doing stuff like this, and I'm sure that the high schools will maintain their followings. It's not like it's going to be every Friday night in Lincoln or six times a year or something like that. So it's not



Mick Stoltenberg puts pressure on Ohio State quarterback JT Barrett during Saturday's game. Stoltenberg was one of three Huskers to be named to the Academic All-District 7 football team.

going to affect anybody really big time long term. It's very, very natural. It was coming."

RILEY SAYS MAURICE HAVING 'ALL-STAR' SEASON

During Monday's press conference, Nebraska Head Coach Mike Riley didn't hold anything back when naming who played well against Wisconsin.

Riley gave high praise to senior defensive tackle Kevin Maurice on how his season has been so far.

"Kevin Maurice is an all-star," Riley said. "He's a really good player. If you take the time to watch him and see what he does, it's big."

The Orlando native has 18 tackles, four tackles for loss and three sacks on the season.

After losing defensive tackles Vincent Valentine and Maliek Collins to the NFL and Kevin Williams to transfer to Michigan State, no other player on the Huskers had bigger shoes to fill than Maurice.

"I just go out there and try to play

hard every snap," Maurice said. "Just do what I am supposed to do, and I have been in position to make some plays and I think that is just about it. Just as simple as that, just doing your job."

Maurice has also been mentors to the young defensive tackle group such as Mick Stoltenberg, Carlos Davis and Khalil Davis. Carlos Davis credited his development to Maurice.

"He is a big role model for me," Davis said. "Just playing with him, I try to get as much as I can from him and watch his tendencies and what he does. He is a tough guy and a great guy off the field too, so I'm just going to learn as much as I can from Kevin."

Maurice said he's seen the improvements in Davis's play over the last few games.

"He is a young guy, so I just try to mold everything that I do to help him. I taught him a lot," Maurice said. "He has really grown over these last couple weeks, and it is just real fun to see him take those big steps. He is going to be a real great player."

Hometown Huskers

Foster emerges as a leader, wants to leave on high note

Story by Kevin Houck • Photo by Mitch Otto

DURING HIS TIME AT NEBRASKA, senior tight end Trey Foster has experienced many ups and down.

Last season, the Lincoln Southeast graduate was a member of his first losing season at Nebraska as the Huskers struggled to a 5-7 regular-season record before rebounding to defeat UCLA in a bowl game.

This season had started out the exact opposite way with Nebraska winning its first seven games for the first time since 2001.

However, after Saturday's 62-3 loss to Wisconsin, the program's second worst in school history, the Huskers are back on a downward slide with two-straight defeats.

Foster is confident the Huskers will be able to finish his senior season strong in the final three games thanks in part to what second-year head coach Mike Riley has been able to instill since being hired in December 2014.

"I'd say since being freshmen and redshirts that came in, this team has been through hell and back," Foster said. "I mean, Mike Rose says it all the time in the locker room. 'This team has been through too much to just show up at a place like Wisconsin and not give it our best efforts, a place like Ohio State and not give them 100 percent of what we've got.'"

Riley knows the importance of turning over a new leaf starting with the team's mindset.

A more positive mindset is starting to take over the team compared to the culture that had been in place the previous six years under the former coaching staff. The Huskers often lost in big moments and didn't respond well to adversity or big game environments.

Prior to Saturday's 59-point loss to Ohio State, NU had only been beaten by 10 points under Riley.

A big part of this success had been due to Riley preaching leadership with younger players relying on seniors like Foster who had been down the difficult path or who had been in a certain situation before.

Foster has lived through those up and downs since the move to the Big Ten

knows it will be up to this senior class to right the ship the last three games.

Foster said with a little bias that this was the best senior class he has been around since he arrived at Nebraska.

"It is my senior class, so I'd like to say so. We're just all brothers trying to go out there and do the same thing. We all want to see each other be successful. I think that the emotional support we show each other for the opposite guys on the field shows how close knit we are."

Foster has good reason for picking his senior class. During their time at Nebraska, the seniors have experienced more adversity than most.

"Just the past year, coming in with the new coach, going through so many close games and not quite getting it and finally playing our best football of the season against UCLA, and then going through a long winter, long spring and just getting better. Then going through the summer workouts and getting better, then losing Foltz (Sam Foltz). Then Jerald (Foster) getting hurt and just getting nicked up and getting tested throughout the year even during the offseason. It just shows how much this team has been through and the success we've had so far just shows that even if things are going to come at us, we're still going to fight, we're still a team that's fighting every single down every single quarter."

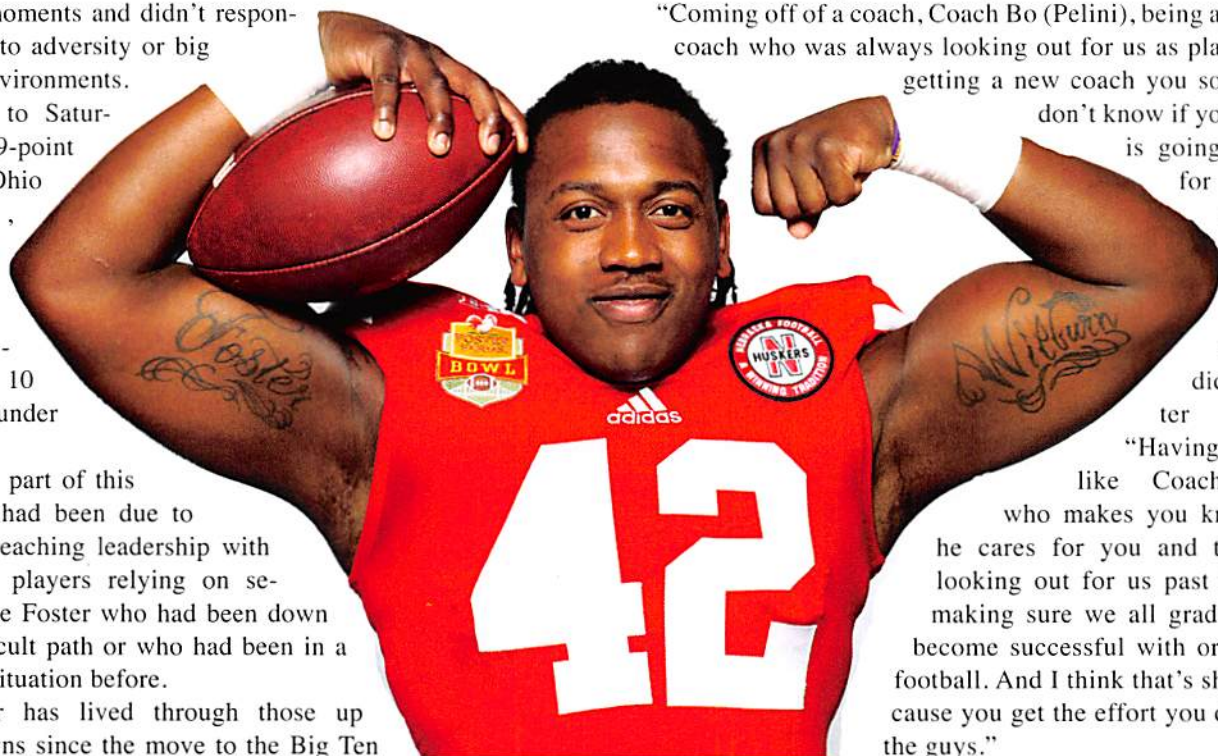
One year ago, players doubted who Riley was and what he brought to the table. Now players know what they got – a coach who's willing to run through a wall for them.

"Coming off of a coach, Coach Bo (Pelini), being a player's coach who was always looking out for us as players and getting a new coach you sometimes

don't know if your coach is going to care

for you the same way that the other coach did," Foster said.

"Having a coach like Coach Riley who makes you know that he cares for you and that he's looking out for us past football, making sure we all graduate and become successful with or without football. And I think that's shown because you get the effort you do out of the guys."





2016 HUSKER FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Location	Results
Sat, Sep 03	Fresno State	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Sep 10	Wyoming	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Sep 17	Oregon	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Sep 24	Northwestern *	at Evanston, Ill.	-
Sat, Oct 01	Illinois *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Oct 15	Indiana *	at Bloomington, Ind.	-
Sat, Oct 22	Purdue *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Oct 29	Wisconsin *	at Madison, Wis.	-
Sat, Nov 05	Ohio State *	at Columbus, Ohio	-
Sat, Nov 12	Minnesota *	Memorial Stadium	-
Sat, Nov 19	Maryland *	Memorial Stadium	-
Fri, Nov 25	Iowa *	at Iowa City, Iowa	-

*Conference Games



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2016 NEBRASKA FOOTBALL ROSTER

No	Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown	No	Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown
1	Lamar Jackson	DB	6-3	195	Fr.	Elk Grove, Calif. (Franklin)	41	Luke McNitt	FB	6-2	240	Jr.	Kearney, Neb. (Nebraska-Kearney)(Kearney)
1	Jordan Westerkamp	WR	6-0	200	Sr.	Lombard, Ill. (Montini Catholic)	42	Trey Foster	TE	6-2	250	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
2	Tony Butler	DB	6-2	195	Fr.	Lakewood, Ohio (St. Edward)	43	Tyrin Ferguson	LB	6-2	225	So.	New Orleans, La. (Edna Karr)
2	Zack Darlington	WR	6-2	195	So.	Apopka, Fla. (Apopka)	43	Todd Honas	WR	5-11	200	Fr.	Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)
3	Lavan Alston Jr.	WR	6-0	175	RFr.	Oxnard, Calif. (St. Bonaventure)	44	Mitch McCann	FB	6-0	240	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Burke)
3	Marcus Newby	LB	6-1	235	Jr.	North Potomac, Md. (Quince Orchard)	44	Mick Stoltenberg	DL	6-5	290	So.	Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)
4	Avery Anderson	S	6-0	185	RFr.	Surprise, Ariz. (Pine Creek (Colorado Springs))	45	Ty Chaffin	WR	6-5	200	Fr.	Burwell, Neb. (Burwell)
4	Tommy Armstrong Jr.	QB	6-1	220	Sr.	Cibola, Texas (Steele)	45	A.J. Natter	DE	6-5	260	Jr.	Milton, Wis. (Milton)
5	Dedrick Young II	LB	6-1	220	So.	Peoria, Ariz. (Centennial)	47	Branden Hohenstein	TE	6-4	205	Fr.	Jackson, Neb. (Bishop Heelan)
6	Eric Lee Jr.	CB	6-0	190	RFr.	Milton, Mass. (Valor Christian (Colorado))	47	Matt Jarzynka	DE	6-4	255	So.	Loup City, Neb. (Loup City)
7	Mohamed Barry	LB	6-1	220	RFr.	Grayson, Ga. (Grayson)	48	Erik Evans	DE	6-3	255	Jr.	Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)
8	Chris Jones	CB	6-0	185	Jr.	Jacksonville, Fla. (Sandalwood)	49	Austin Hemphill	FB	6-0	220	RFr.	Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)
8	Stanley Morgan Jr.	WR	6-1	200	So.	New Orleans, La. (St. Augustine)	49	Chris Weber	LB	6-3	230	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Elkhorn)
9	DaiShon Neal	DE	6-7	270	RFr.	Houston, Texas (Omaha Central)	50	Garret Johns	DL	6-0	285	Sr.	Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)
9	Keyan Williams	WR	5-10	195	So.	New Orleans, La. (Fresno State) (Lusher)	50	John Raridon	OL	6-4	275	Fr.	West Des Moines, Iowa (Valley)
10	Joshua Kalu	CB	6-1	190	Jr.	Houston, Texas (Alief Taylor)	51	Jared Brugmann	LB	6-2	235	RFr.	Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)
10	JD Spielman	WR	5-9	180	Fr.	Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie)	52	Josh Banderas	LB	6-3	240	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)
11	Cethan Carter	TE	6-4	240	Sr.	New Orleans, La. (Archbishop Rummel)	53	Alex Boryca	LB	6-2	220	So.	Cozad, Neb. (Cozad)
11	Boaz Joseph	CB	6-1	190	Jr.	Weston, Fla. (Cypress Bay)	54	Creighton Hamik	LB	6-3	210	Fr.	Kearney, Neb. (Kearney Catholic)
12	Luke Gifford	LB	6-3	230	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)	54	Jordan Ober	LS	6-1	205	So.	Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)
12	Patrick O'Brien	QB	6-4	230	Fr.	San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (San Juan Hills)	54	Robby Painter	OL	6-5	300	Sr.	Centennial, Colo. (Grandview)
13	JoJo Domann	DB	6-1	205	Fr.	Colorado Springs, Colo. (Pine Creek)	55	Kevin Maurice	DT	6-3	300	Sr.	Orlando, Fla. (Freedom)
13	Tanner Lee	QB	6-4	205	Jr.	Destrehan, La. (Tulane) (Jesuit)	56	Brad Simpson	LB	6-0	230	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Ralston)
14	Kyle Kasun	DB	6-0	180	RFr.	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South)	56	Boe Wilson	OL	6-3	295	Fr.	Lee's Summit, Mo. (Lee's Summit West)
15	De'Mornay Pierson-El	WR	5-9	185	Jr.	Alexandria, Va. (West Potomac)	57	Jacob Weinmaster	LB	6-0	215	RFr.	Loveland, Colo. (Loveland)
15	Michael Rose-Ivey	LB	6-0	230	Sr.	Kansas City, Mo. (Rockhurst)	58	Joel Lopez	DL	6-2	280	Jr.	Saint Charles, Ill. (Burlington Central)
16	Antonio Reed	S	6-2	220	So.	Memphis, Tenn. (Southaven (Miss.))	58	Corey Whitaker	OL	6-5	295	Sr.	Murrieta, Calif. (Vista Murrieta)
17	Ryker Fyfe	QB	6-3	215	Sr.	Grand Island, Neb. (Grand Island)	59	Brody Cleveland	LB	6-2	225	RFr.	Ogallala, Neb. (Ogallala)
17	Sedrick King	DE	6-4	250	So.	Plant City, Fla. (Plant City)	61	Bryan Brokop	OL	6-5	275	Fr.	New Lenox, Ill. (Lincoln-Way West)
18	Tre Bryant	IB	5-11	200	Fr.	St. Louis, Mo. (Christian Brothers College)	62	Cole Conrad	OL	6-5	305	So.	Fremont, Neb. (Archbishop Bergan)
19	Marquel Dismuke	DB	6-2	180	Fr.	Calabasas, Calif. (Calabasas)	63	Tanner Farmer	OL	6-4	295	So.	Highland, Ill. (Highland)
21	Charles Jackson	DB	5-11	180	Sr.	Spring, Texas (Klein Collins)	65	Christian Gaylord	OL	6-6	300	RFr.	Baldwin City, Kan. (Baldwin City)
21	Mikale Wilbon	IB	5-9	195	So.	Chicago, Ill. (De La Salle Institute)	66	Dylan Utter	OL	6-1	295	Sr.	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista)
22	Alex Davis	DE	6-5	255	RFr.	Riviera Beach, Fla. (Dwyer)	67	Jerald Foster	OL	6-3	310	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
22	Devine Ozigbo	IB	5-11	230	So.	Sachse, Texas (Sachse)	68	Nick Gates	OL	6-5	290	So.	Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)
23	Dicaprio Bootle	DB	5-10	180	Fr.	Miami, Fla. (Southridge)	71	Matt Farniok	OL	6-6	300	Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D. (Washington)
23	Austin Rose	IB	6-1	225	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (North Star)	72	Zach Hannon	OL	6-5	315	Jr.	Kansas City, Mo. (Rockhurst)
24	Aaron Williams	S	5-11	185	So.	Atlanta, Ga. (Carver)	73	Sam Hahn	OL	6-7	300	Sr.	DeWitt, Neb. (No. Dakota St.)(Tri-County)
25	Nathan Gerry	S	6-2	220	Sr.	Sioux Falls, S.D. (Washington)	74	Jalin Barnett	OL	6-4	310	RFr.	Lawton, Okla. (Lawton)
26	Thomas Connely	LB	5-11	220	So.	Kearney, Neb. (Kearney Catholic)	75	Fyn Anderson	DL	6-3	260	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
26	Brady Pelzer	WR	5-11	185	So.	Bellevue, Neb. (Bellevue East)	76	Dwayne Johnson Jr.	OL	6-6	300	Jr.	Houston, Texas (Bellaire)
26	Jamie Sutcliffe	PK	6-2	190	Sr.	Thousand Oaks, Calif. (Utah/Pierce College)(Thousand Oaks)	76	Dylan Owen	DL	6-5	240	So.	Westchester, N.Y. (Bridgton Academy)(Somers)
27	Kieron Williams	S	6-1	195	Jr.	Shreveport, La. (Air Force Prep)(C.E. Byrd)	77	David Knevel	OL	6-9	315	Jr.	Brantford, Ontario, Canada (Pauline Johnson Collegiate)
27	Sam Foltz	P	6-2	205	Sr.	Greeley, Neb. (Grand Island)	79	Michael Decker	OL	6-4	285	RFr.	Omaha, Neb. (North)
28	Eli Sullivan	DB	6-2	190	Fr.	Longmont, Colo. (Longmont)	80	Brett Classen	WR	6-2	205	Jr.	Medina, Minn. (Winona State)(Wayzata)
28	Adam Taylor	IB	6-2	210	Jr.	Katy, Texas (Katy)	81	Gabe Rahn	WR	6-1	195	Jr.	Le Mars, Iowa (Le Mars)
29	Nolan Graham	DB	5-11	200	So.	Firth, Neb. (Norris)	82	Alonzo Moore	WR	6-2	195	Sr.	Winnfield, La. (Winnfield Senior)
29	Graham Nabity	IB	6-1	210	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Elkhorn)	83	David Engelhaupt	TE	6-3	230	Fr.	Norfolk, Neb. (Norfolk Catholic)
30	Quayshon Alexander	LB	6-3	235	Fr.	Prospect Park, N.J. (De Paul Catholic)	83	Bryan Reimers	WR	6-5	210	So.	Lincoln, Neb. (Lincoln East)
30	Bo Kitrell	FB	6-1	225	So.	Ashland, Neb. (Ashland-Greenwood)	84	Sam Cotton	TE	6-5	250	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
31	Greg Simmons	LB	6-2	240	Fr.	Fort Pierce, Fla. (Fort Pierce Central)	85	Matt Snyder	TE	6-5	255	RFr.	San Ramon, Calif. (California)
31	Conor Young	WR	6-2	170	RFr.	Cozad, Neb. (Cozad)	86	Jack Stoll	TE	6-4	235	Fr.	Lone Tree, Colo. (Regis Jesuit)
32	Tanner Hass	RB	6-0	195	Fr.	West Point, Neb. (Guardian Angels)	87	Brandon Reilly	WR	6-2	200	Sr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)
32	Pernell Jefferson	LB	6-2	225	Fr.	New Orleans, La. (Warren Easton)	88	Ross Dzuris	DE	6-3	255	Sr.	Plattsmouth, Neb. (Plattsmouth)
33	Christian Bailey	WR	6-0	205	Jr.	San Clemente, Calif. (San Clemente)	88	Tyler Hoppes	TE	6-4	240	Jr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Wayne St.)(Southwest)
33	Tanner Zlab	DB	5-10	195	Sr.	Wilber, Neb. (Doane)(Wilber-Clatonia)	89	Connor Ketter	TE	6-5	245	Jr.	Norfolk, Neb. (Norfolk Catholic)
34	Drew Brown	PK	5-11	195	Jr.	Southlake, Texas (Southlake Carroll)	91	Freedom Akinmoladun	DE	6-4	255	So.	Grandview, Mo. (Grandview)
34	Terrell Newby	IB	5-10	200	Sr.	Los Angeles, Calif. (Chaminade)	92	Chase Urbach	LS	6-3	200	RFr.	Grosse Pointe, Mich. (Grosse Pointe South)
35	Caleb Lightbourn	P/PK	6-3	220	Fr.	Washougal, Wash. (Camas)	94	Khalil Davis	DT	6-2	290	RFr.	Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)
35	Jeremiah Stovall	DB	5-11	175	RFr.	Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)	95	Spencer Lindsay	PK	5-9	210	Sr.	Kearney, Neb. (Kearney)
36	Spencer Jordan	FB	6-2	215	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)	95	Ben Stille	DE	6-5	240	Fr.	Ashland, Neb. (Ashland-Greenwood)
36	Reid Karel	DB	6-3	205	RFr.	Seward, Neb. (Seward)	96	Carlos Davis	DT	6-2	295	RFr.	Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)
37	Wyatt Mazour	IB	5-9	190	RFr.	Albion, Neb. (Boone Central)	97	Logan Rath	DT	6-4	280	Sr.	Giltner, Neb. (So. Dakota St.)(Giltner)
38	Harrison Jordan	FB	5-10	230	Jr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)	98	Isaac Armstrong	P	5-11	195	RFr.	Lincoln, Neb. (Kearney) (Southwest)
39	Donovan McDonald	WR	5-11	175	RFr.	Montclair, N.J. (Fork Union Military Academy)(Montclair)	98	Collin Miller	DE	6-3	235	Fr.	Fishers, Ind. (Hamilton Southeastern)
39	Jordan Nelson	IB	5-8	180	Sr.	Omaha, Neb. (Burke)	99	Peyton Newell	DT	6-3	290	So.	Hiawatha, Kan. (Hiawatha)
40	Ty Betka	WR	5-7	165	Sr.	Superior, Neb. (Drake)		Jake Kitten	OL	6-2	290	Fr.	Santee, Calif. (Santana)
40	Grant Jordan	LB	6-2	205	Fr.	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)		Sean Lambert	IB	6-0	200	Fr.	Fremont, Neb. (Fremont)
41	Noah Johnson	IB	6-0	210	RFr.	Sutton, Neb. (Sutton)		Ne'Land Smith	WR	6-3	190	Fr.	Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)



11-12 MINNESOTA 2016

2016 SCHEDULE

Sept. 1	Oregon State	W, 30-23
Sept. 10	Indiana State	W, 58-28
Sept. 24	Colorado State	W, 31-24
Oct. 1	@ Penn State	L, 29-26
Oct. 8	Iowa	L, 14-7
Oct. 15	@ Maryland	W, 31-10
Oct. 22	Rutgers	W, 34-32
Oct. 29	@ Illinois	W, 40-17
Nov. 5	Purdue	W, 44-31
Nov. 12	Nebraska	
Nov. 19	Northwestern	
Nov. 26	@ Wisconsin	

2015 RESULTS (6-7, 2-6)

TCU	L, 23-17
Colorado State	W, 23-20
Kent State	W, 10-7
Ohio	W, 27-24
Northwestern	L, 27-0
Purdue	W, 41-13
Nebraska	L, 48-25
Michigan	L, 29-26
@ Ohio State	L, 28-14
@ Iowa	L, 40-35
Illinois	W, 32-23
Wisconsin	L, 31-21
Central Michigan	W, 21-14*
* Quick Lane Bowl	

COACH TRACY CLAEYS

Claeys became the Minnesota head coach in November of 2015, taking over for Jerry Kill who resigned because of health

reasons. At 47, Claeys has a record of 8-6 at Minnesota which includes a bowl victory. Claeys served as the Gopher's defensive coordinator starting in 2011 and gradually made them into a strong unit. Before that he was the DC at Northern Illinois and Southern Illinois, transforming both into highly-ranked defenses. A Kansas native who graduated from Kansas State, Claeys is one of a few Division I FBS head coaches who did not play collegiate football.



Rodney Smith

Story By Shane G. Gilster • Photos by University of Minnesota Athletic Communications

Huskers Vulnerable to Golden Gophers Attack

After two losses on the road, NU returns to the friendly confines of Memorial Stadium. And they couldn't be happier, especially after their last game. The Huskers not only got embarrassed by Ohio State, quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. got knocked out of the game in the first half. It was a humbling defeat, leaving many Husker fans questioning how their team will end the season.

Now the Huskers have to regroup and prepare for the Golden Gophers of Minnesota. With Armstrong being questionable to start at quarterback and a Blackshirt defense that is reeling, this is a great time for Minnesota to face Nebraska. The last time they were in Lincoln, the Gophers beat NU 28-24 and they will do it again. I expect a physical, grind'em out kind of game, which favors a Minnesota team that can run the ball a lot more consistently and better than Nebraska.

Prediction: Minnesota 28, Nebraska 20

Offensive Preview

Starters Returning/Lost: 5/6

Offense: Multiple

Outlook: The Gophers have an effective rushing attack, averaging 210 yards

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per game. Rodney Smith has rushed for over 950 yards and 13 touchdowns and is a perfect running back for this offense.

He teams in the backfield with Shannon Brooks, who has close to 500 yards but has been injured, and a physical quarterback in senior Mitch Leidner.

Leidner isn't a flashy player but is very consistent and experienced. He has thrown for over 1,500 yards and five TDs and rushed for 251 and seven scores. Nothing spectacular but he doesn't have to be.

His main receiving target is Drew Wolitarsky, who is far and away the Gophers best threat with almost 600 yards and three touchdowns.

Defensive Preview

Starters Returning/Lost:

7/4

Defense: 4-3

Outlook: Much like the Gopher offense, the defense isn't going to win any style points. They just do enough to get the job done.

If they do have an issue, it is with pass defense. They are giving up an average of 232 yards per game. In their last game against Purdue, Boilermaker quarterback David Blough threw for almost 400 yards and four touchdowns.

Against the run they are much better, allowing only 118 yards. So if a team can't throw they won't have a lot of success on the ground.

Jonathan Celestin is a very good linebacker who leads the team with 64 stops and second with tackles for loss with 7 for 20 yards.



Jonathan Celestin

Damarius Travis is a big defensive back (6-2, 215) who is tied for the lead in interceptions and second in tackles.

Special Teams Preview

Starters Returning/Lost:

3/1

Outlook: Place kicker Emmit Carpenter is 16 of 18 in field goals with a long of 53. He is perfect (5-5) between 40 to 49 yards.

Ryan Santoso is averaging 40.2 yards per punt with a long of 60.

Jalen Myrick is the main punt and kickoff returner but starting running back Rodney Smith is averaging 34 yards per kickoff return and one touchdown.

Did You Know?

Minnesota was a dominant team in the 1930s, winning

the national championship three years in a row (1934-36). They also won back-to-back titles in 1940 and 1941.



A Look Back

Nebraska 56, Minnesota 0
Sept. 22, 1990 in Lincoln

This game was over at half-time as the Big Red scored on six of their first seven posses-

sions en route to a 42-0 lead.

"We had it in hand so completely so early. I can't remember a game against a major-college opponent where we were in as good a shape early as we were," said NU head coach Tom Osborne.

Mickey Joseph started at quarterback for the eighth-ranked Cornhuskers, throwing for three touchdowns and running for two more. It was an efficient day for Joseph behind center, as NU rolled up 564 yards of total offense.

Derek Brown became the first freshman to start at I-back for Nebraska in 16 years and had the second-best freshman rushing performance in Husker history with 120 yards. He added two rushing and one receiving touchdown.

The final score (56-0) wasn't the only lopsided statistic. NU had 35 first downs compared to only 8 for Minnesota. The Blackshirt defense held the Gophers to only 106 yards of total offense and never let them past their 45-yard line.

Fast Facts

Location: Minneapolis, Minn.
Enrollment: 51,147
First Year of otball: 1882
National Championships: 7
Conference Titles: 18
Stadium: TCF Bank Stadium
Stadium Capacity: 52,525
Nickname: Golden Gophers
Mascot: Goldy Gopher
Colors: Maroon & Gold
2015 Record: 6-7, 2-6
Conference: Big Ten

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MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

2016 FOOTBALL ROSTER



No	Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)	No	Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
1	Smith, Rodney	RB	5-11	205	RS SO	Jonesboro, Ga. (Mundy's Mill HS)	40	Mohs, Connor	FB	6-1	240	FR	Woodbury, Minn. (East Ridge HS)
2	Johnson, Dior	DB	6-2	210	RS FR	Detroit, Mich. (Southfield HS)	40	Starks, Alexander	DB	5-11	200	RS SR	Plainfield, Ill. (Plainfield North HS)
2	Gentry, Isaiah	WR	6-4	225	RS SO	Cincinnati, Ohio (Moeller HS)	41	Barber, Thomas	LB	6-1	240	FR	Plymouth, Minn. (Robbinsdale Armstrong HS)
3	Hardin, KiAnte	DB	5-10	175	SO	Webb City, Mo. (Webb City HS)	42	Kieft, Ko	TE	6-4	230	FR	Sioux Center, Iowa (Sioux Center HS)
4	Ayinde, Adekunle	DB	6-0	205	RS JR	Blaine, Minn. (Blaine HS)	42	Juenemann, Justin	K	6-0	175	RS JR	Phillipsburg, Kan. (Phillipsburg HS)
5	Myrick, Jalen	DB	5-10	205	SR	Bloomington, Ga. (Savannah Christian Prep HS)	43	Schoenfelder, Bailey	LB	6-3	220	FR	Huron, S.D. (Huron HS)
5	Holland Jr., Melvin	WR	6-3	205	RS SO	Ashburn, Va. (Briar Woods HS)	44	Beebe, Colton	TE	6-3	270	RS FR	Kansas City, Kan. (Piper HS)
6	Johnson, Tyler	WR	6-2	185	FR	Minneapolis, Minn. (North HS)	45	Coughlin, Carter	LB	6-4	220	FR	Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie HS)
6	Rogers, Ace	DB	6-1	210	RS SR	Iowa City, Iowa (Iowa Western CC)	45	Hart, Nick	TE	6-5	245	RS JR	Prior Lake, Minn. (Prior Lake HS)
7	Leidner, Mitch	QB	6-4	230	RS SR	Lakeville, Minn. (Lakeville South HS)	46	DeLattiboudere, Winston	DL	6-3	240	RS FR	Baltimore, Md. (Howard HS)
7	Travis, Damarious	DB	6-2	215	RS SR	Pensacola, Fla. (Pensacola HS)	47	Herbers, Jacob	P	6-2	215	RS FR	Battle Creek, Mich. (Lakeview HS)
8	Williams, Mark	QB	6-0	190	FR	Gainestown, Ala. (Jackson HS)	48	Weber, Blake	LB	6-1	225	JR	Prior Lake, Minn. (Rochester CTC)
8	McGhee, Duke	DB	6-1	205	RS JR	Decatur, Ga. (Cedar Grove HS)	49	Martin, Kamal	LB	6-3	225	FR	Burnsville, Minn. (Burnsville HS)
9	Carter, Eric	WR	5-11	195	RS JR	Lakeland, Fla. (Lake Gibson Senior HS)	50	Lynn, Jack	LB	6-3	240	RS SR	Lake Zurich, Ill. (Lake Zurich HS)
11	Croft, Demry	QB	6-5	200	SO	Rockford, Ill. (Boylan HS)	52	Timms, Yoshoub	DL	6-2	295	RS SR	Fort Walton Beach, Fla. (Fort Walton Beach HS)
11	Winfield Jr., Antoine	DB	5-10	195	FR	The Woodlands, Texas (The Woodlands HS)	53	Rasmussen, Luke	OL	6-7	295	RS SO	Brookfield, Wis. (Central HS)
12	Poock, Cody	LB	6-2	230	RS JR	Okoboji, Iowa (Iowa Western CC)	55	Mayes, Connor	OL	6-5	330	JR	Van Alstyne, Texas (Van Alstyne HS)
12	Register, Hunter	WR	6-5	215	RS FR	Lafayette, La. (Comeaux HS)	56	Rallis, Nick	LB	5-11	240	RS SR	Edina, Minn. (Edina HS)
13	Celestin, Jonathan	LB	6-1	220	JR	Jonesboro, Ga. (Mundy's Mill HS)	58	Oseland, Quinn	OL	6-6	320	RS FR	Springfield, Ill. (Sacred Heart Griffin HS)
14	Craighton, Zo	DB	6-1	195	RS FR	Geismar, La. (Dutchtown HS)	59	Dixon, Ray	LB	6-3	225	RS JR	Loxahatchee, Fla. (Seminole Ridge HS)
15	Williams, Everett	LB	6-1	235	JR	Mansfield, Texas (Legacy HS)	60	Leidner, Matt	OL	6-2	290	RS JR	Lakeville, Minn. (Lakeville South HS)
15	Rhoda, Conor	QB	6-3	215	RS JR	Eagan, Minn. (Cretin-Derham Hall HS)	61	Dovich, Bronson	OL	6-5	300	RS FR	Chaska, Minn. (Chaska HS)
16	Durr, Coney	CB	5-10	190	FR	Baton Rouge, La. (Dutchtown HS)	62	Weyler, Jared	OL	6-4	305	RS SO	Dayton, Ohio (Centerville HS)
17	Huff, Jacob	DB	5-11	205	SO	Bolingbrook, Ill. (Bolingbrook HS)	63	Just, Ryan	OL	6-4	290	JR	Rochester, Minn. (Rochester Comm. & Tech. College)
17	Green, Seth	QB	6-4	235	FR	Woodbury, Minn. (Allen HS)	64	Olson, Conner	OL	6-5	295	FR	Monticello, Minn. (Monticello HS)
18	Santos, Ryan	P	6-6	250	RS JR	Pace, Fla. (Pace HS)	66	Stieber, Ted	OL	6-6	320	RS FR	Akron, Ohio (Hoban HS)
18	Geary, Clay	WR	5-10	185	FR	Lakeville, Minn. (Lakeville South HS)	70	Fahning, Chad	OL	6-6	290	RS JR	St. Paul, Minn. (DeLaSalle HS)
19	Moore, Gary	DL	6-4	295	RS SO	Mobile, Ala. (Murphy HS)	71	Schlueter, Sam	OL	6-6	290	FR	Victoria, Minn. (Mayer Lutheran HS)
19	Conway, Michael	WR	6-5	225	RS JR	La Crescent, Minn. (Aquinas HS [Wis.])	73	Greene, Donnell	OL	6-7	345	RS SO	Marietta, Ga. (Coffeyville C.C.)
20	Huff, Julian	LB	6-0	225	SO	Bolingbrook, Ill. (Bolingbrook HS)	74	Connelly, Nick	OL	6-7	300	RS FR	Red Wing, Minn. (Red Wing HS)
21	Buford, Ray	DB	6-2	200	RS FR	Detroit, Mich. (Southfield HS)	75	Kuehn, Noah	OL	6-6	305	RS FR	Eagan, Minn. (Eagan HS)
22	Gorgen, Joey	DB	6-0	180	RS FR	Mineral Point, Wis. (Mineral Point HS)	76	Calhoun, Vincent	OL	6-4	330	JR	Roswell, Ga. (Southwest Mississippi CC)
22	McCrory, Kobe	RB	6-1	235	JR	Chipley, Fla. (Butler CC)	77	Moore, Tyler	OL	6-4	305	SO	Galena Park, Texas (North Shore HS)
23	Brooks, Shannon	RB	6-0	210	SO	Atlanta, Ga. (Pickens HS)	78	Wright, Garrison	OL	6-4	320	RS JR	Beattie, Kan. (Butler CC)
24	Dipre, Troy	DB	6-0	210	RS FR	Solon, Ohio (Kent State)	79	Pirsig, Jonah	OL	6-9	325	RS SR	Blue Earth, Minn. (Blue Earth Area HS)
24	Hmielewski, Drew	WR	6-1	195	FR	Marshall, Minn. (Marshall HS)	80	Wozniak, Nate	TE	6-10	275	RS JR	Greenwood, Ind. (Center Grove HS)
24	Mayer, Adam	WR	6-1	215	RS FR	Walnut Creek, Calif. (De La Salle HS)	81	Anyanwu, Duke	TE	6-4	245	RS JR	Blaine, Minn. (Blaine HS)
25	Jordahl, Payton	LS	6-2	225	RS SO	Perham, Minn. (Perham HS)	82	Wolitsky, Drew	WR	6-3	220	SR	Santa Clarita, Calif. (Canyon County HS)
25	Howard, Phillip	WR	5-11	185	FR	Minneapolis, Minn. (Robbinsdale Cooper HS)	83	Pietruszewski, Danny	TE	6-3	225	FR	South St. Paul, Minn. (South St. Paul HS)
26	Smith, Brian	WR	6-4	210	RS JR	Milwaukee, Wis. (Brookfield East HS)	84	Reger, Will	WR	6-3	198	RS SO	Burnsville, Minn. (Burnsville HS)
26	Swenson, Calvin	DB	6-0	205	FR	Kaukauna, Wis. (Kaukauna HS)	85	Witham, Bryce	TE	6-4	250	RS FR	Grand Rapids, Mich. (West Catholic HS)
27	Johannesson, James	RB	6-1	230	RS FR	Fargo, N.D. (Fargo South HS)	86	Lingen, Brandon	TE	6-5	250	JR	Wayzata, Minn. (Wayzata HS)
28	Femi-Cole, Jonathan	RB	6-0	225	RS FR	Vaughan, Ontario, Canada (St. Andrew's College)	87	Elmore, Gaelin	DL	6-6	275	JR	Somerset, Wis. (Somerset HS)
29	Djam, Carlton	RB	5-11	215	RS SO	Lindstrom, Minn. (Central Lakes College)	88	Still, Rashad	WR	6-5	205	SO	El Paso, Texas (Andrew HS)
30	Amoako, Eric	DB	5-11	195	RS SR	Arlington, Texas (Houston Baptist University)	89	Morse, Matt	WR	6-1	190	RS FR	Apple Valley, Minn. (Apple Valley HS)
31	Thomas, Kiondre	DB	6-0	180	FR	Fort Smith, Ark. (Northside HS)	90	Renner, Sam	DL	6-4	250	RS FR	Maple Grove, Minn. (Maple Grove Senior High)
32	Wieland, Brady	DB	5-11	185	FR	Milwaukee, Wis. (Saint Francis HS)	91	Kafo, Julien	DL	6-4	265	RS SO	Mont-Tremblant, Quebec, Canada (Vanier)
33	Harte, Andrew	K	6-0	181	RS JR	Downers Grove, Ill. (Montini Catholic HS)	92	Devers, Tai'yon	DL	6-4	215	FR	Pompano Beach, Fla. (Blanche Ely HS)
33	Johnson, Tamarion	DL	6-5	215	FR	Detroit, Mich. (Bradford Academy HS)	93	Jackson, Merrick	DL	6-2	320	RS JR	East St. Louis, Ill. (Iowa Western CC)
34	Shenault, Antonio	DB	5-11	180	SO	Roselle, Ill. (Lake Park HS)	94	Gibson, Jerry	DL	6-3	245	RS SO	Theodore, Ala. (Theodore HS)
34	McElfresh, Logan	P	6-1	205	RS SO	Brainerd, Minn. (Brainerd HS)	95	Ekpe, Hendrick	DL	6-5	240	SR	Lewisville, Texas (Lewisville HS)
35	Waters, Jaylen	LB	6-3	255	RS FR	Killeen, Texas (Copperas Cove HS)	96	Richardson, Steven	DL	6-0	300	JR	Chicago, Ill. (Mt. Carmel HS)
36	Cashman, Blake	LB	6-2	225	SO	Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie HS)	97	Ekpe, Scott	DL	6-4	285	RS SR	Lewisville, Texas (Lewisville HS)
37	Mack, John	K	6-0	185	FR	Hartland, Wis. (Arrowhead HS)	98	White, Sam	DL	6-3	265	FR	Muskego, Wis. (Muskego HS)
38	Carpenter, Emmitt	K	6-0	199	RS SO	Green Bay, Wis. (Ashwaubenon HS)	99	Stelter, Andrew	DL	6-4	290	JR	Owatonna, Minn. (Owatonna HS)
39	Hansen, Trey	LS	6-2	205	RS FR	Cedar Falls, Iowa (Cedar Falls HS)							

How Nebraska's Opponents Fared in Week 10

Sept. 3

Fresno State (1-9)

Colorado State 37, Fresno State 0

Colorado State did what they wanted when they wanted through all four quarters against the Bulldogs. Colorado State quarterback Nick Stevens threw for 237 yards and two touchdowns and the Rams running backs added three touchdowns. With the shutout, Fresno State has now lost eight-straight games.

Sept. 10

Wyoming (7-2)

Wyoming 52, Utah State 28

Wyoming jumped out to a 35-7 halftime lead but Utah scored 21 unanswered points in the third quarter to cut the lead to within a touchdown. Quarterback Austin Allen answered on the ensuing drive hitting tight end Jacob Hollister for a 37-yard touchdown and the Cowboys then pulled away. Allen threw for 261 yards, four touchdowns and an interception.

Sept. 17

Oregon (3-6)

USC 45, Oregon 20

The Trojans scored on their first three possessions to jump out to a 21-0 lead to hold off the Ducks. USC running back Ronald Jones tied a school record with four rushing touchdowns and added 171 rushing yards. Oregon freshman quarterback Justin Herbert threw for 162 yards and a touchdown.

Sept. 24

Northwestern (4-5, 3-3)

Wisconsin 21, Northwestern 7

Wildcat quarterback Clayton Thorson found wide receiver Austin Carr in the endzone to cut the Badgers lead to 10-7 before halftime but Wisconsin held Northwestern scoreless in the second half to run away with the victory. Carr had 12 receptions for 132 yards and a touchdown and Wisconsin running back Corey Clement ran for 106 yards and a touchdown.

Oct. 1

Illinois (2-7, 1-6)

Illinois 31, Michigan State 27

Illinois quarterback Jeff George Jr. connected with wide receiver Sam Mays for a 16-yard touchdown pass with a 1:25 left in the game to take the lead and the Illini defense came up with a fourth down stop at its own 15-yard line to squeeze out the victory. Illinois running back Kendrick Foster ran for 146 yards and two touchdowns.

Oct. 15

Indiana (5-4, 3-3)

Indiana 33, Rutgers 27

Indiana running back Devine Redding gave the Hoosiers the lead late in the third quarter with a 34-yard touchdown

run and caught quarterback Richard Lagow's third touchdown pass of the game in the fourth quarter to rally back against Rutgers. Lagow threw for 394 yards and two interceptions to go along with his three touchdowns.

Oct. 22

Purdue (3-6, 2-4)

Minnesota 44, Purdue 31

Purdue intercepted a pass right before halftime and returned it to the Minnesota two-yard line. Quarterback David Blough connected with tight end Brycen Hopkins to give the Boilermakers a 28-23 lead at halftime. The Boilermakers drew within 37-31 on a 34-yard field goal by J.D. Dellinger with 4:29 remaining in the game. The Purdue defense then forced a three and out, but the Boilermaker offense was stopped on a fourth and one and the Golden Gophers were able to tack on another score.

Oct. 29

Wisconsin (7-2, 4-2)

Wisconsin 21, Northwestern 7

A 46-yard end-around score by Wisconsin receiver Jazz Peavy in the second quarter gave the Badgers a 10-0 lead in the second quarter. Corey Clement ran for 106 yards and a touchdown. Wisconsin converted 7 of 19 third down attempts, running 79 total plays and holding the ball for over 40 minutes.

Nov. 12

Minnesota (7-2, 4-2)

Minnesota 44, Purdue 31

Minnesota trailed Purdue 28-23 at halftime but held Purdue to only three points in the second half. Gopher running back Rodney Smith ran for 153 yards and three touchdowns and quarterback Mitch Leidner added 231 yards passing and 74 rushing yards with two touchdowns in the victory.

Nov. 19

Maryland (5-4, 2-4)

Michigan 59, Maryland 3

Maryland Head Coach D.J. Durkin's homecoming didn't go as planned. Durkin was Michigan's defensive coordinator last season. Michigan quarterback Wilton Speight threw for a career high 362 yards and accounting for three touchdowns in the route. Maryland quarterback Perry Hills left the game with a shoulder injury in the second quarter.

Nov. 25

Iowa (5-4, 3-3)

Penn State 41, Iowa 14

The Nittany Lions scored on seven of their 11 possessions and cruise to a 24-7 lead at halftime. Penn State running back Saquon Barkley ran the ball 20 times for 167 yards and a touchdown. Iowa was held to 30 yards rushing on 26 carries. Penn State has now won its fifth-straight conference game.

This Week In Husker History

Nov. 13, 1999

Story by Kevin Houck • Huskers Illustrated Archives

This week in Husker History we look back into a top 10 battle. The No. 7 Huskers faced No. 5 Kansas State in Lincoln on Nov. 13, 1999.

Quarterback Eric Crouch ran for 158 yards and two touchdowns and the Blackshirts held Kansas State quarterbacks to 7 of 31 passing for 69 yards as Nebraska defeated Kansas State, 41-15.

The Huskers improved to 9-1 on the season, while the Wildcats streak of 21-straight Big 12 regular-season wins was snapped. Kansas State's last previous conference loss had been a 56-26 setback to the Huskers in 1997.

The Wildcats got a break early in the game. Nebraska I-back Dan Alexander fumbled on the first play from scrimmage and Kansas State defensive back Lamar Chapman recovered the fumble at the Husker 27-yard line.

The Blackshirts came up with a big stop on third down to set up a 40-yard field goal attempt by kicker Jamie Rheem but defensive end Kyle Vanden Bosch blocked the attempt. The block was Vanden Bosch's third block in the last two games.

After trading punts, wingback Bobby Newcombe returned a punt 28 yards to the Kansas State 44-yard line. Crouch put the Huskers on the board four plays later with a 30-yard rushing touchdown to give the Huskers a 7-0 lead nine minutes into the game.

On the ensuing kickoff, line-backer Mark Vedral forced cornerback Terence Newman to fumble and cornerback Ralph Brown recovered the ball at the 27-yard line and returned it to the Kansas State 1-yard line.

But on the next play, running back Correll Buckhalter fumbled to end the scoring opportunity.

Nebraska's special teams came up big again. Linebacker Randy Stella blocked the punt and the ball rolled out of the endzone for a safety to give NU a 9-0 advantage.

The Huskers extended their lead with an 18-yard touchdown by Crouch to cap off an 11-play, 73-yard drive to put the Huskers up, 16-0.

Kansas State's special teams responded with a play of their own. Running back David Allen returned the ensuing kickoff 44 yards to set up a 1-yard rushing touchdown by quarterback Justin Beasley,

to cut the lead to 16-6 with a failed two-point conversion attempt.

Nebraska, which had won six-straight games against top-10 teams in Lincoln, extended the lead to 24-6 as the Huskers went 62 yards on 14 plays before fullback Willie Miller scored on a four-yard rushing touchdown. Crouch, who had 124 yards on 18 carries in the first half, set up the score, finding Tracey Wistrom for 14 yards on a third-and-11 play.

Rheem cut the lead to 24-9, hitting on a 35-yard field goal with 25 seconds left in the half to cap a nine-play, 62-yard drive. Beasley, who was 3-of-13 for 100 yards in the first half, connected with Quincy Morgan on a 55-yard screen pass to the NU 18-yard line, but could not get into the endzone before settling for the field goal.

Nebraska took advantage of K-State's second fumble of the game on the first drive of the second half as safety Mike Brown forced a fumble at the Kansas State 44-yard line. Nebraska drove 31 yards on seven plays and pushed its lead to 27-9 on Josh Brown's 30-yard field goal with 12:34 remaining in the third quarter.

Beasley was 0-for-6 in the second half, finishing the game 3-for-19 for 100 yards passing before giving way to quarterback Adam Helm in the third quarter.

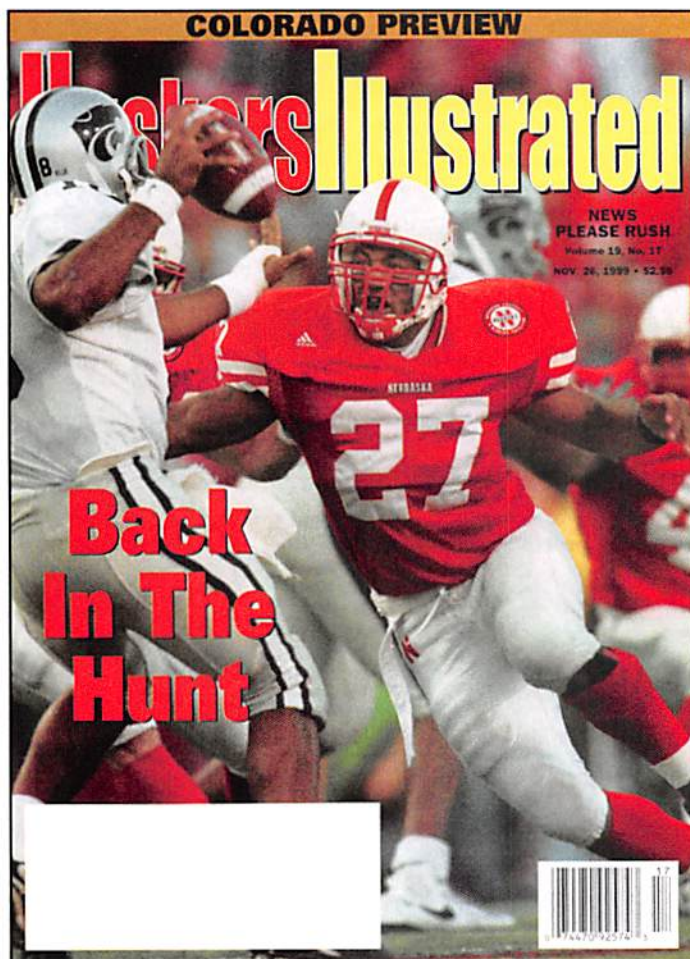
On the Wildcats next possession, Mike Brown forced his second turnover of the day, intercepting a Helm pass at the Kansas State 46.

The Huskers took advantage as I-back Dahrran Diedrick took a handoff and went 46-yards for the TD, extending Nebraska's lead to a 34-9.

Helm scored on a 1-yard run in the fourth quarter before Eric Johnson's 15-yard fumble return with 3:10 remaining provided the final margin of 41-15.

Crouch ran for 158 yards on 27 carries to lead the Huskers. Diedrick complemented Crouch with his own 97 yards rushing on 14 carries.

The win assured NU of its 31st straight nine-win season and put the Huskers into a first-place tie with KSU in the Big 12 North Division. Nebraska went on to win the Big 12 Championship against Texas, 22-6.





A Stroll Down Rasmussen Road With **BOBBY REYNOLDS**

1950-52 Halfback

Column by Butch Rasmussen • NU Media Relations

Summer 1949.

The kid from Grand Island pulls out of town and heads toward Lincoln, Nebraska where he plans to play football for the Nebraska Cornhuskers.

He's got a year to wait and learn because in those days freshmen couldn't play varsity football but at the end of his career four years later he had become a college football legend.

Every long-standing Husker Football fan remembers the iconic Bobby Reynolds, a young athlete who made a powerful statement during the short time he was healthy enough to play good football for Nebraska. Reynolds was a halfback for the Huskers from 1950-1952 during the days when there was such a designation in the backfield of most college football teams.

All Reynolds had to do was show up in Lincoln to make a statement regarding his athletic abilities. Nebraska hadn't had a winning season for 10 years until Reynolds guided them to a 6-2-1 season his first year on the Memorial Stadium turf.

Reynolds was a first team All-America his first season in Lincoln and is best remembered for a touchdown run against Missouri which went from sideline to sideline and back again before adding 6 to the scoreboard. He got credit for a 33 yard touchdown run but some say he ran well over 100 yards and I suppose they had the film to prove it.

Paving the way for many of Reynolds' spectacular jaunts was North Platte's Charlie Toogood who played tackle for the Husker offense. Toogood went on to play several years for the Los Angeles Rams in the NFL.

Reynolds playing time was limited the rest of his career after that fabulous sophomore season in 1950 but that season defined Bobbie Reynolds as no other could. School single season rushing records of over 1300 yards and 22 touchdowns stood for 30 years and were just part of that sophomore legacy. His average points per game of 17.4 were an NCAA record. Mike Rozier took down both of those records in 1983.

After his sophomore season Reynolds fell victim to a separated shoulder, a broken leg and infection from lime in his eye and even with his playing time limited during his final 2 seasons due to injuries, Reynolds managed to set a career scoring record of 211 points which stood for 22 years and a record 2196 rushing yards which held up for 21 years. For 60 years many have wondered what that kid from Grand

Island High School could have done if he'd been healthy his final two seasons.

Oklahoma great, the late Billy Vessels, 1952 Heisman Trophy winner for the Sooners said they'd never seen anybody as exciting as Bobby. "He was probably as talented a player as ever played the game," Vessels said.

Just as his football career was cut short, so was his life cut short. Reynolds died in Lincoln in 1985 at the age of 54.

At the time of Reynolds death, the perfect cartoon was drawn by Paul Fell of the *Lincoln Journal Star*. It shows Reynolds looking skyward, helmet in hand in the midst of an inverted cone-shaped ray of light from the heavens. The caption from a voice far above: "Great game Bobby."

Back in the days when Nebraska played freshman ball against opposing teams on Friday afternoons, I used to get tickets for the section 300 VIP area above the press box in the west stands

I had a 12-year-old guest with me for a game one afternoon and the kid was an avid Husker fan.

It happened Reynolds was there and sitting not too far away from us so I nudged the kid and asked if he knew who that guy was.

"No," he said, he didn't know who that guy was.

Figuring I'd give the kid a real thrill I told him "That's Bobby Reynolds." The kid followed with the question "who's Bobby Reynolds?"

I guess the years go by too fast. That youngster didn't know he was sitting near one of the greatest Huskers of all time.

It's amazing what Reynolds accomplished in only one good year of being healthy.

Remember, back then they didn't have the facilities, the equipment, the trainers and the workout regimen that make today's athletes so remarkable but Reynolds could hold his own with any of them.

Reynolds is given credit for leading his Grand Island High School basketball team to a 44-1 record and two state championships and back-to-back undefeated state football championships.

A unique young athlete for sure!

GREAT GAME BOBBY !

The Loyal Nebraskan

Former Husker split end Todd Brown's dream was to play for NU



Story By Shane G. Gilster

Photo courtesy of NU Media Relations

Although he caught only 65 passes in his career, a number that many top receivers catch in a season these days, former NU split end Todd Brown was one of the best receivers in Nebraska history.

He wasn't the biggest (6-0, 175) but he had speed to burn.

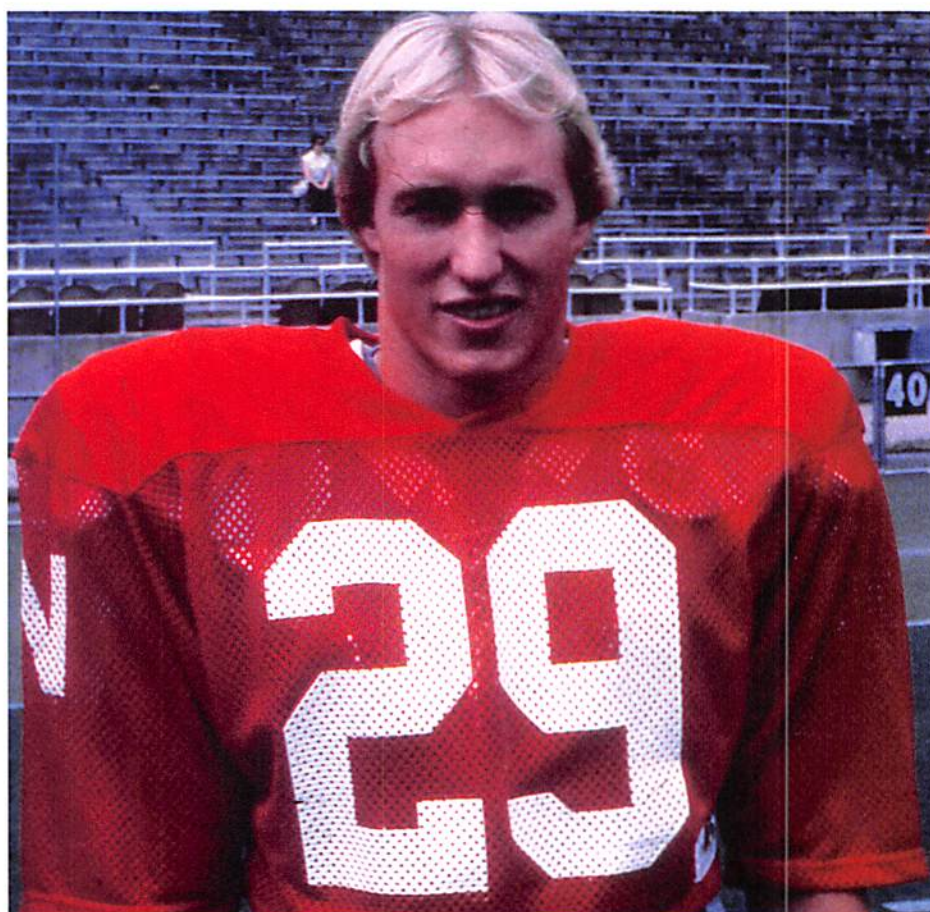
"My inroad was my speed," Brown said. "I became pretty good at the 40-yard dash, running a 4.36/4.38 handheld, and I worked hard at it. I was right in there with Irving Fryar...we were side-by-side when running. At the NFL Combine, the only wide receiver that was faster than I was Willie Gault."

As a high school track star at Holdrege High School, Brown ran the 100 meters and was a long- and triple-jumper. As a senior he was a state champion in all three of those events, running the 100 in 10.8 and breaking the state record in the triple jump by four feet. That record stills stands: 50 feet, two-and-a-quarter inches.

"Nebraska offered me a scholarship for track, but my heart was to play football for Nebraska. You can't play football on a track scholarship," Brown explained. "So I passed up a track scholarship and walked on the football team. The reason Coach (Tom) Osborne didn't give me a scholarship [was] because he didn't know if I was fast enough. So I ran the 100 meters in the spring of my senior year."

Because he had the necessary speed along with his athletic ability, Brown was fortunate enough to earn a scholarship in the second semester of his freshman season.

"I would have played even if they didn't



Todd Brown was one of the best receivers to ever play for the Huskers.

offer me one," Brown said. "It was a huge dream for me to play for Nebraska. When you were a young man, the pinnacle of sports in our state was to represent the state. It was almost a patriotic thing, like going to the army or something. There was something that was compelling inside. It was representing my community; it was my representing my family, representing my God, to be a Husker. It was really important.

"I don't know if young people feel that way anymore, but in my high school when I grew up, if you wore an Oklahoma shirt, you would get razed all day long. It was like another country, you were flying a different flag. I was so loyal, not just me but our community and everybody I grew up with. If you felt like you had a shot to make it (play football at Nebraska), try it. That is certainly what I did."

Brown said he was lucky as a freshman, because within the first week he was one of five players on the team to redshirt in the

new freshman redshirt ruling. Dave Rimington, Roger Craig and Jamie Williams were part of that group.

"So I never played on the freshman team," Brown said. "It was the best move strategically that could have happened to me. I came up there just wanting to make a name for myself. I was only 160 pounds, but was really fast. It (redshirt year) toughened me up and taught [me] to go full speed. I saw playing on the scout team as an honor, and if I could score touchdowns on the Blackshirts, I could start for Nebraska. If you ask the defensive coaches from back then, I raised a lot of havoc in their secondary as a freshman against the Blackshirts. I scored a lot of touchdowns and gave them a good look."

For a Nebraska boy from a small town in Nebraska, it was more than just football. That shone through to his teammates who didn't know what Husker Football was about.



Todd Brown (29) eludes the last defender and steps into the end zone to complete an 18-yard touchdown play from Turner Gill.

"It was important to me, it was important to my community and it was important to my family. These people from out-of-state got a sense of this being a bigger deal than your average college football," Brown said. "I think it gave them a sense a pride for the state and a love for the people of this state, and ultimately it elevated everybody's game. This isn't just about me becoming an NFL football player. We didn't worry about that."

As a redshirt freshman in 1979, Brown bided his time on the depth chart. He did not have any receiving stats, but learned from veteran receivers like Tim Smith. Then as a sophomore in 1980, Brown won the job at split end, and he didn't disappoint, having his best season as a Husker in catches (28), yards (416) and touchdowns (five).

Brown said the most memorable game of his career came in that 1980 season, in a home game against Florida State. At the time the Seminoles were not the "name" program they are today. As Brown put it: "It was just another non-conference 'we're going to kill 'em' kind of game."

Brown felt he personally played a really good game. There was something about that game; he felt he contributed a lot, and not just because he scored a couple of touchdowns. (Brown scored both of Nebraska's touchdowns on pass receptions.)

Even though Brown had a good game, the Cornhuskers did not. FSU upset the Big Red in their own backyard, 18-14. NU had a chance to win the game at the end when they drove to the Seminole three-yard line with just 12 seconds left to play. But as quarterback Jeff Quinn rolled left, he was hit by an FSU linebacker and fumbled.

"If Jeff wouldn't have gotten hit, I was

wide open in the end zone," Brown said. "I ran a simple out pattern and I had their defensive back's number all game, and he took a fake to the inside and I spun him around. So I was standing wide open in the corner end zone as Jeff was getting hit and going down."

At the end of that game Bobby Bowden sought out Brown and told him that he played a really good game.

Brown started again at split end in 1981 and 1982. Even though he didn't catch as many passes as most receivers would have liked, for Brown, just winning mattered most.

"For me, I wasn't there to catch balls, I was there to win football games. I was there to represent my state, and to do whatever it takes to helps the Huskers win," Brown said.

When Brown caught the ball, it was a big play. He knew he was going to get only three or four balls a game, but that they were going to be big plays. He had several games in which he caught two touchdowns, despite catching a total of only three passes.

"It was a different way in thinking about a receiver. It was just as much fun to spring Mike Rozier or Roger Craig on a big run than it was for me to catch a pass. I was there for the team, not for myself," Brown said.

Brown and the 1982 team suffered probably one of the most gut-wrenching losses in Nebraska football history. It came in State College, Pa., against the eighth-ranked Penn State Nittany Lions. Nebraska came in ranked No. 2, featuring probably the most talented offense of any Husker team ever. The offensive line had Outland and Lombardi Trophy winners

Dave Rimington and Dean Steinkuhler, tight end Jamie Williams, I-backs Mike Rozier and Roger Craig, quarterback Turner Gill and receivers Fryar and Brown.

"When we lost to Penn State out there because of those two bad calls, Coach Osborne handled it like a man," Brown said. "What he said at the end of the game was just a character builder. He said, 'Guys, you want to win a national championship, you gotta play so much better than the other team that no one can take it away from you. So no one say anything about the officiating, those guys don't try and make bad calls, just don't talk about it.'"

"It was good for us to hear, because our heart was broke. I felt we were as good a team Nebraska has ever put on the field."

But not winning a national title didn't define Brown's playing career, or his college experience.

"A national title would have been nice, but I got so much out of the game, the memories, the teaching, and the life experiences. Just playing for Coach Osborne was enough."

After Nebraska, Brown was drafted by the Detroit Lions in the sixth round, but ended up playing Canadian football for six years before hanging up his cleats.

The teaching, life experiences and lessons learned carried Brown into a very rewarding profession.

"I was involved with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and became a Christian before I came to the University of Nebraska. That has been a driving force in my life," Brown explained. "I found a way to take my profession, or architecture and construction, and point it towards promoting the gospel by designing and building churches across the United States. I am the CEO of the company: Brown Church Development Group."

Having his office in Kearney, Brown enjoys life with his wife on an acreage along the Platte River. The couple has four children, ranging in age from 31-year old twins to a son who played for Turner Gill at Liberty University and will graduate next May.

Brown was and always will be a perfect example of a Nebraska kid living out his dream. And he has nothing but high praise for how the NU football program enabled him to realize that dream.

"You knew that the Nebraska program developed you into a player that was competent and able to compete. It was more about the testimony of the Nebraska program than about something great about that individual. They turned willing kids into football players."

And Brown was simply that.

Huskers defeat rival Penn State in five sets

Courtesy NU Media Relations • Photo by Reggie Ryder

The No. 1 Nebraska volleyball team fought its way to a 3-2 (22-25, 25-17, 25-23, 23-25, 15-11) win at No. 11 Penn State on Friday night in front of 5,564 fans at Rec Hall.

The Huskers (21-1, 12-1 Big Ten) maintained their lead in the Big Ten standings with their second five-set win at Penn State (17-7, 9-4 Big Ten) in the last two years. Nebraska won its 14th straight road match, and five of its six road wins in Big Ten play have come against ranked teams.

Andie Malloy had her best match as a Husker with 19 kills on .312 hitting. Mikaela Foecke also added 19 kills, and Amber Rolfzen matched her career high with 16 kills and had no errors for a .615 hitting percentage. She also matched her season high with nine blocks.

Justine Wong-Orantes had 23 digs, becoming the new Nebraska career record holder. She surpassed Kayla Banwarth's career total of 1,706 with her 16th dig of the match, which came midway through the third set. Kenzie Maloney added a career-high 17 digs, and Kadie Rolfzen also had a season-high 17 digs to go with nine kills. Kelly Hunter posted 61 assists with eight digs and five blocks.

After being outblocked 6.5-0 in the first set, Nebraska regrouped and outblocked the Nittany Lions 13-5.5 the rest of the way, finishing with a 13-12 edge. The Huskers outhit Penn State .238 to .166 and have held six straight opponents under .180 hitting. Penn State entered the match as the third-best hitting team in the nation (.304).

Simone Lee led Penn State with 23 kills and added 13 digs. The Nittany Lions have lost four matches in a row for the first time since 1982, though all four have come against top-16 teams.

Set 1: Penn State posted 4.5 blocks early in the set to build a 13-8 lead, which came after a 4-0 run. The Huskers put together three straight points on Kadie Rolfzen and Amber Rolfzen kills around a Penn State hitting error to pull within 14-12. The Huskers pulled within two points on two occasions but committed a service error each time to end their rally. Penn State's block continued to hurt the Big Red as the Nittany Lions increased the lead to 20-15. Nebraska trailed 23-17 before a Penn State service error and two hitting errors made it 23-20. A kill by Haleigh Washington gave PSU four set points at 24-20. The Huskers killed off the first two with a pair of kills by Malloy, but Simone Lee finished the set with a kill and the 25-22 PSU win.

Set 2: The Huskers turned to Malloy early and often, and she produced three kills to help them to a 5-4 lead. Amber Rolfzen was in on a block and notched two kills, and Malloy tacked on an-



Justine Wong-Orantes broke Kayla Banwarth's school record for digs.

other for a 9-6 lead. Malloy's 10th kill, an ace by Albrecht and a free ball smash by Hunter made it 12-8 Big Red. Penn State ran off three straight points to cut it to 12-11, but an Amber Rolfzen kill and Penn State hitting error restored a 14-11 Husker advantage. Two blocks by Holman - one with Kadie Rolfzen and one with Foecke - moved the lead to 17-12 and capped a 5-1 run. A kill by Malloy and ace by Wong-Orantes extended the margin to six, 20-14, before Penn State's second timeout. Penn State pulled within 21-17, but NU closed out the set with a 4-0 run to even the match. Amber Rolfzen posted back-to-back kills and a block with Hunter to spark the Big Red down the stretch. Nebraska hit .256 and held Penn State to .098. The Huskers were much better at the net, posting four blocks after none in the first set.

Set 3: Another pair of early kills by Malloy gave the Huskers a 4-3 lead, but Penn State answered with three straight points for a 6-4 edge. Penn State led 7-5 before Nebraska took control. The Huskers went on a 9-0 run to stake a 14-7 lead. Amber Rolfzen had a kill and two blocks in the run, and Foecke smashed a pair of kills. Penn State trimmed the deficit to 14-10, but a block by Amber Rolfzen and Foecke got the Big Red sideout after

a timeout. The Nittany Lions cut it to 19-17, but Malloy answered with her season-high 15th kill. But Penn State continued to chip away at the lead and tied the set 20-20 on a Heidi Thelen kill. Amber Rolfzen put NU back in front with a kill, and Foecke followed with one of her own after a tough serve by Sydney Townsend. Penn State committed a hitting error, and the Huskers were back ahead by three, 23-20. Foecke gave Nebraska set point at 24-21, and Kadie Rolfzen pounded home the winner at 25-23.

Set 4: Penn State went up 8-6 before a Holman kill and a Malloy solo block tied the score at 8-8. Another block by Hunter and Amber Rolfzen put the Huskers ahead for the first time in the set, 12-11. Penn State regained a 13-12 lead before Foecke tied it with her 14th kill. The Nittany Lions went ahead 16-14, but Kadie Rolfzen tallied a kill and the Huskers won a replay challenge that ruled a Penn State hit went out, and the set was tied 16-16. A sideout battle ensued until Hunter and Amber Rolfzen teamed up for a block and a 20-19 lead. After a Penn State timeout, Washington struck for two kills to give Penn State a 21-20 lead and force a Husker timeout. Foecke terminated out of the timeout, but the Huskers committed a pair of errors to

give the Nittany Lions a 23-21 lead. Hunter hammered down an overpass to get within one and then stepped to the service line. Lee earned set point for Penn State, and the Nittany Lions closed out the 25-23 win to force a fifth set.

Set 5: Foecke found the floor first, and Penn State misfired for a 2-0 Husker lead. Penn State tied it 2-2 before Kadie Rolfzen snuck a kill down along the net to make it 3-2. Nebraska took a 6-3 lead after back-to-back kills by Malloy, both of which came after great floor defense by the Huskers' back row of Maloney and Wong-Orantes. After a Penn State timeout, Amber Rolfzen recorded her 14th kill and then combined with her twin sister for a block to make it 8-3 as the teams changed sides. She added another kill after the short break to finish off a 6-0 run and put NU ahead 9-3. The Nittany Lions didn't go away, though, scoring three straight to cut the deficit in half, 9-6. With a 10-7 lead, the Huskers got kills by Amber Rolfzen and Foecke to go up 12-7 and force Penn State's final timeout. The Nittany Lions got within 12-9 before a kill by Foecke, and the Nittany Lions hit wide to give NU match point at 14-9. The Huskers

won the match, 15-11, after a challenge found Foecke's shot touched the line for the final point.

Nebraska 3, Rutgers 0

The top-ranked Nebraska volleyball team swept Rutgers 25-10, 25-14, 25-12 on Saturday night at College Avenue Gym.

With their 10th-straight win, the Huskers improved their overall record to 22-1 and their Big Ten-leading record to 13-1. Rutgers fell to 4-23 overall and 0-14 in conference play. The Huskers have won 22 straight matches away from the Devaney Center.

Nebraska was dominant from start to finish, jumping out to a 9-1 lead in the first set and never looking back. Briana Holman had 12 kills and three blocks and hit .688, and Kadie Rolfzen had 10 kills with six digs and four blocks. Mikaela Foecke had five kills, and Amber Rolfzen had four kills and eight blocks. Kelly Hunter put up 33 assists, and Justine Wong-Orantes led the team in digs with 10.

Nebraska out-hit Rutgers .395 to -.024, the lowest hitting percentage by a Husker foe this season. The Huskers served six aces - two of which came from Sydney Townsend

- and had an 11-4 edge in blocks. Nebraska more than doubled Rutgers in kills with a 41-19 advantage.

Set 1: Nebraska set the tone early with a 9-1 start. An Amber Rolfzen kill made it 15-6 and started a 5-0 run that put the Huskers ahead 19-6. The Huskers took a 25-10 win by hitting .467 and holding Rutgers to .125. Kadie Rolfzen and Holman each had four kills.

Set 2: The Huskers built a 12-4 lead and went up 22-10 on an ace by Wong-Orantes. A Tiani Reeves kill - the first of her career - made it 23-13, and an Amber Rolfzen solo block finished off the 25-14 win. The Huskers limited the Scarlet Knights to -.133 hitting in the set.

Set 3: The Huskers broke free from a 5-4 lead with a 7-1 run to go up 12-5. Holman connected on four kills to give the Huskers a 17-7 lead. A kill by Olivia Boender, a dump by Hunter and a pair of blocks by Amber Rolfzen increased the Husker lead to 22-9. Kills by Foecke and Holman sealed the set, 25-12.

Up Next: The Huskers return home to host Iowa next Wednesday at 7 p.m. on NET-2.

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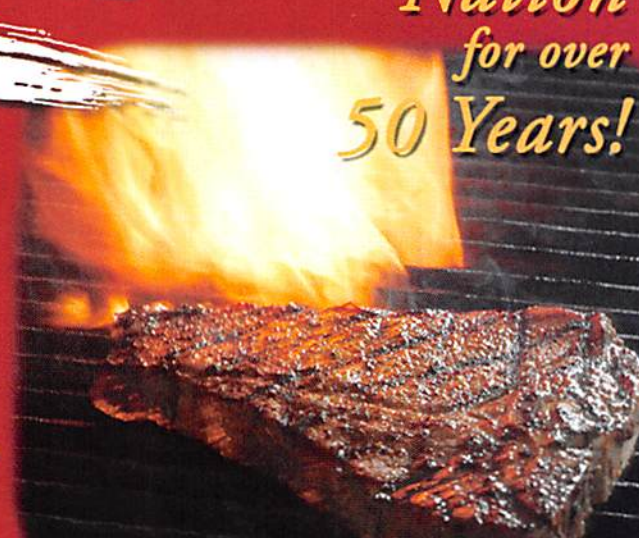
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MIKAELA FOECKE IS KNOWN FOR BEING ONE OF THE HARDEST HITTERS ON THE HUSKERS, B

MASTER BLASTER

Mikaela Foecke adds the tip to her repertoire of shots

Story by Bob Hamar • Portrait Photo by Mitch Otto, Action shot by Reggie Ryder

Mikaela Foecke likes to hit the volleyball, and she likes to hit it hard. She hit it extremely hard last December and was named MVP of the Final Four as the Huskers won their fourth national championship.

She's even better this season. Midway through the Big Ten season, Foecke was the team's second-leading attacker with 2.74 kills per set while hitting .301. Foecke hit .277 as a freshman a year ago.

"Statistically all her numbers are up," Nebraska coach John Cook said. "Last year at times she could take over a match, but I think she's a lot more confident this year. At this time last year, she was just a very average player statistically, but she's much improved and she's playing a tougher position and she's going against two blockers more.

"I think she's understanding how to find a way to get kills like tipping and tooling, instead of just blasting."

That's what Foecke did in the summer. She worked on other aspects of her attack, like the tip.

"I know I've worked really hard to do so," Foecke said. "Hopefully I've added more shots. Last year I was one dimensional. Hopefully this year I have a little bit broader range on my shot chart."

Cook compared volleyball hitters to a relief pitcher who throws the 100 mile-per-hour fastball, but is told by coaches to start throwing change ups.

"They want to bring the heat," Cook said. "For her, that is a hard adjustment, but it's part of the game plan and you have to make them play the whole court. She did a really good job of following the game plan."

Cook praised Foecke for her volleyball IQ and ability to hit the offspeed shots.

"She can make those adjustments, but I think if you asked Mikaela she would rather thump it than tip it," Cook said.

No doubt about that.

"Oh for sure," Foecke said. "I think anyone would rather just hammer one down. I think when you're allowed to go up there and just rip it as hard as you can, it's kind of like a thank you. Everything is going the way it should. It's just super rewarding not only for a passer and the setter but also for the hitter just knowing that everybody has done their job, and you can just go up there and rip it."

But, Cook said, the harder a player hits it, the better tipper they can be because the defense is on its heels.

"They want to show it as late as possible and just have a little fine touch over the block," Cook said. "Typically what players do when the tip is they give it away, they slow down their approach which says, 'Here, I'm going to tip.' The key is just to make them think you're going to hit the ball and at the last second you pull up and tip. That's what's hard."

It's also hard to win a national championship, yet alone two in a row. Winning last year may have been kind of a blur for Foecke. It took a while for it all to sink in.

"It probably didn't settle in that we had won until I went back home in May," Foecke said. "With everything we did, it still seemed like we were in season. We were still working out and everything. As soon as we came back in June it was no longer about last year but all about this year, what we were going to do to be able to do that."

Now the Huskers are going after not only another national title, but a Big Ten championship as well. Foecke will certainly be a big part of any success they have, but this year they will have to go to Columbus, Ohio, for the Final Four.

T SHE HAS ADDED THE TIP THIS SEASON.

2016 Schedule

VERT Challenge at Eugene, Oregon

Aug. 26	Florida	W, 3-1
Aug. 27	Texas	W, 3-0

Nebraska Invite at Lincoln, Nebraska

Sept. 2	Iowa State	W, 3-0
Sept. 3	Oregon State	W, 3-0

Lobo Classic at Albuquerque, N.M.

Sept. 8	Montreal (Exh.)	W, 3-0
Sept. 9	Arkansas	W, 3-0
Sept. 10	New Mexico	W, 3-0

Ameritas Challenge at Devaney Center

Sept. 16	Montana State	W, 3-0
Sept. 16	Gonzaga	W, 3-0
Sept. 17	Creighton	W, 3-1

Sept. 23	at Michigan	W, 3-0
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Sept. 24	at Mich. State	W, 3-2
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Sept. 28	at Illinois	W, 3-0
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Oct. 1	Ohio State	L, 3-1
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Oct. 7	Indiana	W, 3-0
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Oct. 9	Purdue	W, 3-0
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Oct. 14	at Ohio State	W, 3-1
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Oct. 16	at Maryland	W, 3-0
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Oct. 21	Wisconsin	W, 3-0
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Oct. 23	Minnesota	W, 3-2
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Oct. 28	Illinois	W, 3-0
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Oct. 29	Northwestern	W, 3-0
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Nov. 4	at Penn State	W, 3-2
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Nov. 5	at Rutgers	W, 3-0
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Nov. 9	Iowa	6 p.m.
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Nov. 12	at Indiana	6 p.m.
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Nov. 16	Penn State	7 p.m.
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Nov. 19	at Iowa	6:30 p.m.
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Nov. 23	at Minnesota	8 p.m.
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Nov. 26	Michigan	7 p.m.
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Dec. 1-3	NCAA 1st, 2nd Rds	TBD
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Dec. 9-10	NCAA Regionals	-TBD
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Dec. 15	NCAA Semis	at Columbus
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Dec. 17	NCAA Finals	at Columbus
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DREAMING BIGGER

NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Bob Hamar • Photo by Reggie Ryder

CONCUSSIONS HAPPEN IN VOLLEYBALL

In the third set of Nebraska's match against Illinois on Oct. 28, libero Justine Wong-Orantes was hit in the face by a hard spike.

She seemed OK at the time, but later that night complained of a headache. That's why she didn't play the next night against Northwestern.

Nebraska coach John Cook said players get hit in the face all the time, but this won't land squarely because it was actually rising.

"When I watched it on video, she was trying to get out of the way but she couldn't," Cook said. "I think that was a normal hit, it would have glanced off of her. But the fact it was rising, she couldn't get out of the way. When I saw it on video, it was a lot more violent hit."

Concussions haven't been a big topic of conversation in the volleyball world, but they do happen.

Nebraska's Olivia Boender had a concussion a year ago when she ran into another player's shoulder.

"I'd never heard of a concussion in volleyball until about two years ago," Cook said. "I had never seen one. Now we've had about three of them."

Cook said assistant coach Chris Tamas, a U.S. National Team captain during his playing days, took some shots from Olympian Clay Stanley.

"Clay Stanley is the hardest hitter maybe ever in the world," Cook said. "(Tamas) was hit by him in the head several times, but he walked it off and kept playing. Maybe brains are getting softer. I don't know."

Another factor is that the women's game has come a long way in recent seasons.

"If anything, the game is a lot more physical than it was 10 years ago," Cook said. "The ball is being hit a lot harder. That's maybe why we're seeding more often."

DEFENSE RULES

Fans may notice the big hitters, but Cook said top teams often build their programs on other areas of the game. Penn State coach Russ Rose has been doing that for a long time.

"When you look at programs - Nebraska, Penn State -- we try to build our foundation on serve, block and defense," Cook said. "If you do that, you're always going to be in the game. I

think with Russ, it's part of their culture. It's what they're all about. They play defense. They train it hard. It's emphasized."

Cook developed his philosophy back in the 1990s when he was coaching at Wisconsin.

"I probably learned that from Penn State," Cook said. "That's something you can control. You can control how well you serve, you can control how well you block for the most part, and then you control your effort on defense."

SENSE OF URGENCY

A year ago, the Huskers dropped back-to-back home matches to Minnesota and Wisconsin last in October. This year, they beat both those teams at the Devaney Center on the same weekend.

Last year's team developed a sense of urgency after those losses that helped it focus and win 16 straight matches to claim the school's fourth national title.

So, does this year's team have that same sense of urgency?

"I don't know," Cook said. "We'll find out. I can't predict that. I just know what I've talked to them about since January which is trying to do something that's never been done before. We're trying to go from good to great to unstoppable. They have to focus on the process of getting better every day."

It's not easy. Not every team can do it, especially as the grind of a long season wears on the players.

"That's the challenge this time of year is mentally can you stay in the grind and continue to get better," Cook said. "Because you're either going to get better or you're going to get worse."



Amber Rolfzen makes an attack for the Huskers earlier this season.

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